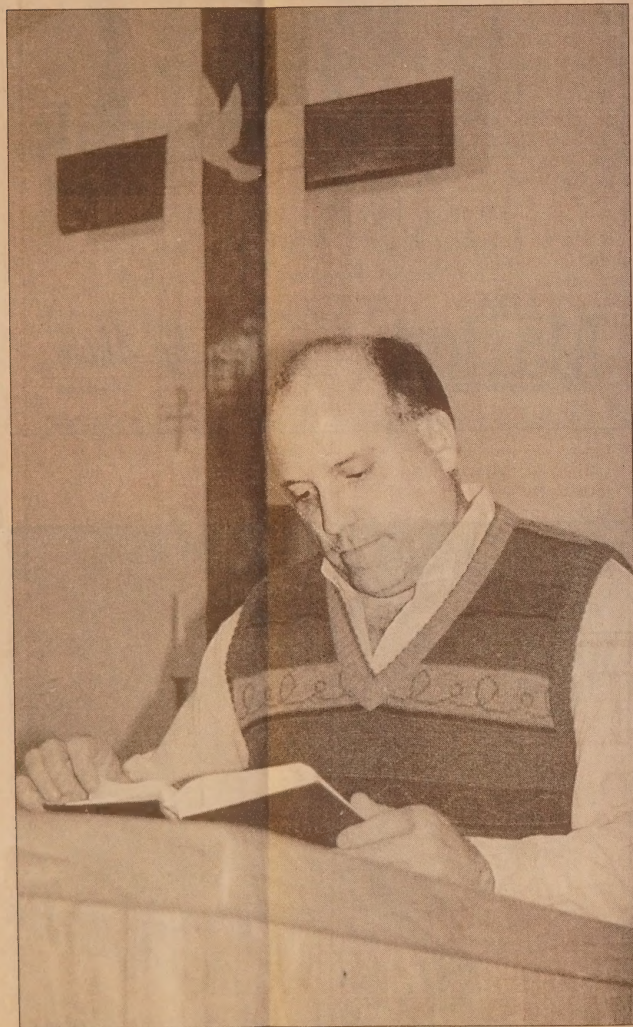


Gay Christian fundamentalists establish Bible college



Associated Press

The Rev. Jerry Stephenson said he founded the Grace Institute Bible College & Seminary because there were no conservative, evangelical, fundamental schools allowing gays and lesbians to be open about their sexual orientation.

Associated Press

CEDAR GROVE — Grace Institute Bible College & Seminary is conservative, fundamental and evangelical. It even uses some of the same texts as the Rev. Jerry Falwell's Liberty University.

But there is a key difference. Most of Grace Institute's students and faculty members are homosexual. Its founder, the Rev. Jerry Stephenson, insists that being a gay or lesbian fundamentalist is not a contradiction in terms.

"If I sat down, and Jerry Falwell didn't know who I was, and we started talking theology, he'd be taking me out to dinner and we'd have a wonderful time," Stephenson said.

Like many other Christian conservatives, Stephenson believes in a literal heaven and hell and being saved and born again. But he acknowledged Falwell would differ with his belief that "we can be gay and lesbian and still be Christians."

Falwell, who is chancellor of Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va., did not want to comment because he knows nothing about Stephenson or Grace Institute, said Laura Swickard, a spokeswoman for the evangelist.

Finding his path

Stephenson, 42, received a conservative Christian education at Trinity International University in Miami and North Florida Baptist Theological Seminary in Jacksonville, where he earned a doctorate in theology.

He was a Southern Baptist minister for 15 years at churches in South Florida, from West Palm Beach to Key West, all the time struggling with his sexual orientation.

Stephenson spent two years in a group called Worthy Creations at the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale. It attempts to convert gays to heterosexuality. He proclaimed himself "cured" and worked with another conversion group in Key West be-

fore realizing he had not changed.

"At the time, I was engaged to be married," Stephenson said. "She knew and I knew that all the counseling in the world wasn't going to change my inside feelings."

He left the Southern Baptists in 1990 and then taught at Trinity International until his homosexuality was discovered.

Moving to the Florida Panhandle about a year ago, he took a teaching job in a public school and opened Grace Institute so gays and lesbians could openly earn degrees in Biblical studies, Christian counseling, church administration and music.

"There were no conservative, evangelical, fundamental schools out there that would take us unless we hid in the closet," Stephenson said.

Classes for about 10 students are held two nights a week at the Family of God Worship Center in Cedar Grove, a small town next to Panama City. Stephenson said the center is affiliated with the conservative, predominantly gay and lesbian Alliance of Christian Churches.

Some 25 other students take courses by correspondence or at satellite locations, Stephenson said.

Going against tradition

Traditional Christian conservatives condemn homosexuality as a sin and maintain gays and lesbians cannot gain salvation without repenting. The Rev. D. James Kennedy, senior minister at Coral Ridge Presbyterian, said someone can no more be a Christian homosexual than a Christian adulterer.

"If the Bible does not teach that homosexuality is a sin, it doesn't teach that anything is a sin," Kennedy said from Fort Lauderdale. "It teaches it over and over and over again."

Stephenson contends such teachings are the result of misinterpreting the Bible or taking passages out

of context. In some cases, he said, the Bible has been mistranslated.

"You cannot build the Bible and totally understand the Bible just from the pages of the Bible," he said. "We have to look at history."

Grace Institute teaches creationism, but Stephenson concedes Charles Darwin "was not totally a lunatic." Things do evolve, he said.

"Something had to happen for there to be black people, white people, Chinese people, Indian people," Stephenson said. "They all didn't just stem from Adam and Eve."

The same goes for sexual orientation, he said.

There is room for disagreement, said the Rev. Tom Gashlin, Family of God's pastor and a Grace Institute teacher. He said his Bible doctrine

class uses three texts by accepted conservative biblical scholars that differ on the second coming.

"For Jerry Falwell to say that what he says is the only right interpretation, or any of these guys, is arrogant," Gashlin said.

The key issue is salvation, Stephenson said.

He cited John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"We are the whosoever," he said. "It bothers me with my fundamentalist friends when they would say 'You're going to hell for being gay.' That's not what the Bible says. When we accept Jesus Christ he is ours."

Florida's oldest business proves fruitful

Associated Press

SARASOTA — Confederate Army Capt. Tom Albritton was fleeing the aftermath of the Civil War when he left his native Georgia to start a new life in Florida.

It was a time when fortunes could be made in citrus.

He planted his first citrus trees near Bartow in 1880, but after the freeze of 1895, his son T.A. Albritton, moved the business farther south to Sarasota.

Albritton Fruit Co. has been there ever since, making it — at age 119 — Florida's oldest continually operated family business, according to the Institute for Family Enterprise at Bryant College in Smithfield, R.I.

Today, 16 of Albritton's descendants work in the family business, but Capt. Tom wouldn't recognize



Associated Press

Four generations of Albrittons, headed by 98-year-old Karl Albritton, foreground, gather outside the family's original fruit plant in Sarasota.

have been quick to innovate. They replaced their 50-year-old plant four years ago with a new \$4 million plant. They've placed fresh-squeezed orange juice vending machines at area gyms and produce ice cream and fudge to pick up sales at the retail stores during the summer.

They also have experimented with selling a blend of strawberry and orange juice at their stores and opened their plants to public tours.

The company employs 50 year-round workers and another 200 during the height of the citrus season in the winter. Many seasonal workers are Mennonites.

Next generation

No one told Hope Morgan, Karl's granddaughter, that she should go into the family business but it was something she assumed she would do her entire life. She tried other jobs before joining the company's accounts receivable office. Her son, Jason, is the manager of the juice plant.

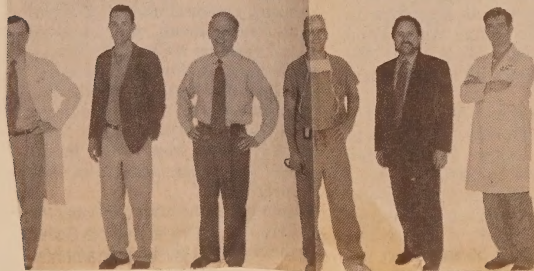
"We work well together as a family," she added. "It's something they've managed to teach the next generation."

And it looks like there will be a next generation.

John Albritton Jr. has four sons, the oldest is age 9. They've already expressed an interest in the company.

"They'll have children," Karl Albritton said, "and their children will have children."

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Pensacola News Journal

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In-Reply-To: <19981116.181254.8359.5.RevMarge@juno.com>
To: revmarge@JUNO.COM
Date: 17 Nov 1998 07:35 CDT
Subject: Reply to: Re: Question
Message-ID: <6296052@birmingham.va.gov>
X-Status: Read

I found out a bit more after I sent you the e-mail. They approved to let their minister officiate at same-sex blessing ceremonies.

Here is the "SMALL" article I took off the USA Today web site:

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. - Members of a Baptist church have given their ministers permission to officiate at same-sex blessing ceremonies - a break with their state and national Baptist conventions. A statement approved Sunday by members of Wake Forest Baptist Church stopped short of affirming same-sex unions, but it asked that God bless "all loving, committed and exclusive relationships between two people." The Rev. Mac Brunson, the Baptist State Convention president, warned last week that the convention would end its relationship with Wake Forest Baptist if the church voted to affirm same-sex unions.

If you're interested, their address is:
107 East South Avenue
Wake Forest, NC 27587
(919) 556-5141

Tammy

From: "Dolf Boek" <dolf@netlink.com.au>
Return-path: <dolf@netlink.com.au>
To: "Dolf Boek" <dolf@netlink.com.au>
Date: Wed, 16 Dec 1998 18:01:12 +1100
Subject: My Dialog With The Apostle Paul
Message-ID: <00a501be28c2\$3416aba0\$63ac10cb@home>
X-Status: Read
X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook Express 4.72.2106.4

Hay + Church

I wanted to share with you a short paper that I will be presenting to my local church with whom I have begun a protest.

Regards

Dolf Boek
Melbourne, Australia

My Dialog With The Apostle Paul

"Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him." [Romans 14:3]

Dolf: "Paul, somehow I think you'd understand how we gay men and lesbians have a burden for our fellow heterosexual Christians. Would you agree that they fail to understand as we do, that acceptance is found in the full realisation of grace?"

Paul: "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God." [Romans 10:1-3]

Dolf: "How do you feel about attempts by some Christians to impose homosexuality as a criteria of moral conduct for entry into and participation within community life of Christian churches today?"

Paul: "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes...Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, 'The man who does those things shall live by them.'" [Romans 10:4-5]

Dolf: "Basically you're saying that, a Christian who sees virtue in being heterosexual isn't simply going to be judged by how they treat their spouse and children, but how they comply with the principle moral ethic of 'showing a regard for others as yourself' relative to being heterosexual. But does that give them the right to pronounce judgement upon, diminish and expel gay men and lesbians from their churches because they are not heterosexual?"

Paul: "The righteousness of faith speaks in this way. 'Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is to bring Christ down from above) or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).' But what does it say? 'The word is near you, even in your mouth and in your heart' (that is, the word of faith which we preach)." [Romans 10:6-8]

Dolf: "Just as I thought Paul, those Christians who pronounce judgement

upon
homosexuals are making a determination of who will go to heaven and who will go to hell. In reality they are uttering a false gospel and aren't they working against the very testimony of Jesus Christ who gave his life for all humanity?"

Paul: "The Scriptures says, 'Whoever believes on him will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between [heterosexuals and homosexuals], for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon him. For, 'whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'" [Romans 10:11-13]

Dolf: "That brings me to an important point regarding your Epistle to the Romans Chapters 1 & 2. Most Christians think that you were specifically focussing on gay men and lesbians when you said: 'God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in the lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.' [Romans 1:26-27] What would you say to those who claim to be Christians and yet use your statements as judgements of gay men and lesbians?"

Paul: "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to licentiousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." [Ephesians 4:17-19]

Dolf: "Hang on a minute, they are the same observations and advice you gave in your Epistle to the Romans Chapter 1 but now you're speaking as though its Christians who do such things. Are you suggesting that Christians by their judgement of others are actually engaging in abuse of humankind and are therefore no better than the Gentiles who have given themselves over to unbridled lust?"

Paul: "...Whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge do the same things. But we know that the judgement of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. And do you think this, O man, you who judge those who do such things, and do the same, that you will escape the judgement of God?" [Romans 2:1-3]

Dolf: "Excellent point Paul. Its quite audacious really to create an idol out of their heterosexuality and demand others give compliance to it. In

closing, do you have any last minute advice to those Christians who, by making judgements of gay men and lesbians usurp the privilege of judgement which alone belongs to God,?"

Paul: "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." [2 Thessalonians 2:3-4]

Dolf: "You've clarified that the gospel which you present is not against gay men and lesbians. But what advice would you give to those Christians who misrepresent God's acceptance of humanity?"

Paul: " But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard him and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in righteousness and true holiness. Therefore, putting away lying, each one speak the truth with his neighbour, for we are members of one another. [Ephesians 4:20-25]

Dolf: "Do you have any final comment for those Christians who are still skeptical about accepting and including gay men and lesbians?"

Paul: "For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God--and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." [1 Corinthians 1:26-30]

Dolf: "Thank-you Paul. I guess as gay men and lesbians who possess the richness of grace we have an obligation to receive others just as Christ received us to the glory of God. We ought not cast them out as they have cast us out."

Winner 1997 Rainbow Award - "Leadership by a gay male"

Author: 'Androgynous Christian' <http://www.netlink.com.au/~dolf>

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'See You at the Pole' attracts thousands in state



ONE NATION UNDER GOD — Jessica Johnson of Fayette High School leads 50 classmates in prayer outside for "See You at the Pole," Sept. 17.

By Jennifer Davis Rash
The Alabama Baptist

During the 10 a.m. break at Fayette High School on Sept. 17, 50 students encircled the school's flagpole to pray for their school. About 20 students at Fayette Middle School did the same thing earlier that morning.

Those 70 Fayette students joined the estimated 20,000 to 25,000 other Alabama students for the annual "See You at the Pole" event.

Around 300 students met at Dora High School for 30 minutes worth of singing and praying, said Chad Blevins, associate pastor at First Baptist Church, Dora. The 9:30 a.m. break time was chosen rather than the traditional early morning time so that those students riding buses could attend, he noted.

"The students came away with a positive
(Please see 'Students' page 5)

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Letters to the Editor

ABC NOT FOR REAL

It was interesting to note that after ABC 33/40's much publicized decision not to show the infamous "Ellen" coming out show earlier this summer, they decided on Sept. 3 to air the rerun of that show.

What changed ABC 33/40's opinion that it was not suitable for prime time to being suitable for such, just a few weeks later?

Could its earlier decision just have been a publicity stunt, meaning they really just care about ratings, not the welfare of our state's children?

It really was not the show that was so irritating, only the management of ABC 33/40's flip-flop on this fundamental issue regarding society.

Don Wallace
Northport, Ala.

IS IT A DISEASE?

I read the recent article about homosexual's lifestyles (Sept. 11 issue). Mr. Loper had some good views and helpful information. One remark that bothered me was "people are drawn to the homosexual lifestyle for many, many reasons." He added that homosexuality is a common disease.

We as a society have tried to view this as a disease, while others have said it is a learned behavior or it is from birth. We seem to miss the mark each time.

We, the Christians, should view it as it really is. It is simply a lost sinner with a demonic control over his/her life. Satan has unleashed these particular demons from hell to help destroy our society in the "last days" of this particular generation. We know that God our

Father in heaven hates all sin, but this particular sin is an abomination in His eyes, which we read from the Holy Bible.

Lay hands on a homosexual and rebuke the demon that has control of his/her life and see what happens. In the next few minutes, you will have the opportunity to lead that person to salvation through Christ Jesus. Our Holy Bible tells us that we fight not against flesh and blood but against principalities of darkness.

Yes, a homosexual can ask for forgiveness and receive God in his/her life without being rebuked of the demon on their life or in their life. We Christians can simply "cut to the chase" and hit the problem with "hands on."

Marlon Long
Demopolis, Ala.

THE ALABAMA BAPTIST

"If ye continue in my word, then . . . ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

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Historical Highlights

50 Years Ago September 1947

Baptist Religious Educators Meet: The second annual meeting of the Southeastern Baptist Religious Education Association was held at Howard College the last week in August, with registration totaling 85 and more than 100 attending from nine states. Fields of work represented were: Educational Directors, Church and Educational Secretaries, Pastors' Assistants, Ministers of Music and Christian Education Teachers. The initial meeting of this organization was held five years ago at Mars Hill College, North Carolina, but the war interrupted plans for further meetings. This session voted to meet again next year the last week of August with the meeting to be held again at Howard College. Representatives from Alabama who were elected as officers for 1947-48 are: President, J. L. Pollard, educational director at Hunter Street Baptist Church, Birmingham, and Miss Estelle Hall, educational director, Woodlawn Baptist Church, Birmingham.

40 Years Ago September 1957

The Hospital Coupons Built: Costing \$42,000 a modern 16-bed hospital at the Alabama Baptist

Children's Home in Troy was built and equipped with money received from coupons collected for the home by various women's groups and individuals. According to E. E. Cox, superintendent, the cost of the Home's health program is now being paid for each year by money received from coupons. Officials at the Children's Home estimate that more than \$7,000 is received annually in cash and merchandise from the redemption of coupons, trading stamps and other premiums.

30 Years Ago September 1967

Brymer Named Assistant at The Alabama Baptist: Jack E. Brymer, of Graysville, was named assistant to the editor of *The Alabama Baptist*, effective Sept. 1. His duties will include editing, news reporting, feature writing and public relations for the paper. Brymer is a graduate of Samford University where he majored in journalism and religion. Before joining the paper, he served the First Baptist Church of Graysville for nine years as minister of music and more recently as associate pastor. He will continue there on a part-time basis.

20 Years Ago September 1977

BHS campuses offering free prostate testings

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men, and it ranks as the second leading cause of cancer deaths in men.

That's disturbing news, particularly for the estimated 334,500 men who will be diagnosed this year with prostate cancer.

And for African-American men, prostate cancer death rates are among more than twice as high as in white men.

According to the National Prostate Education Council, "Prostate cancer has the highest mortality rate in the world in black men." Age is the other leading risk factor for prostate cancer, with more than 85 percent of cases diagnosed in men over age 65.

But the good news is that prostate cancer can be treated and with increasing success in early stages.

To help detect prostate cancer early, the Montclair and Princeton campuses of Birmingham Baptist Medical Center and Shelby Baptist Medical Center will offer screenings for men age 50 and older or at 40 for African-American men or those with a family history of prostate cancer.

Screenings will be noon to 1 p.m. and 5 to 6:30 p.m. Sept. 15-16 at Montclair; and 7 to 9 p.m. Sept. 22-23 at Princeton; and 4:30 to 8 p.m. Sept. 15 and 4 to 8 p.m. Sept. 16 at Shelby BMC. (BHS)

Compiled by Kathleen V. Prude

John H. Buchanan Award: Samford University biology professor, William Mike Howell, has been chosen as the recipient of this year's annual John H. Buchanan Award for Excellence in Classroom Teaching. The \$1,000 award, established in 1965 by an anonymous donor is made on the basis of a poll of graduating seniors which is reviewed by a faculty-administration committee. Results are revealed at Samford's semester-opening chapel program each fall. A Geneva native, Howell has been a Samford faculty member since 1966, except for a two-year stint (1972-74) at Cornell University.

10 Years Ago September 1987

Something Old, Something New: The newest landmark in Huntsville belongs to the oldest church in the Alabama Baptist Convention. Sunday, September 13, was dedication day for the new 229-foot-tall bell tower of Huntsville's First Baptist Church, a congregation whose roots reach back to 1809. When the sanctuary was occupied in 1966, the tower remained unbuilt because of the church's position relative to the airport's flight plan. Since that time, Huntsville has opened a new airport, allowing construction of the tower.

UM nursing granted accreditation

The National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission has granted continuing accreditation to the University of Mobile bachelor's and master's degree nursing programs for the maximum 8-year period.

The Commission specifically praised the program's student-oriented mission that prepares nurses for a global society, the university's commitment to cultural diversity and the faculty's commitment.

The Commission's ruling was based on a lengthy self-study report and an on-site visit from a peer review committee. The Commission

voted Aug. 8 to grant continuing accreditation to UM's baccalaureate and master's programs in nursing, with the next visit for reaccreditation slated for the spring of 2005.

The University of Mobile offers a bachelor of science in nursing, as well as a master of science in nursing with three concentrations: nursing administration, adult health nursing and family nurse practitioner. UM also offers a two-year associate degree in nursing program, which is also accredited.

Twenty-four faculty members teach 270 students. (UM)

Prepaid tuition program deadline nears

Time is running out for parents who wish to enroll their children in the Alabama Prepaid Affordable College Tuition program this year.

The program allows parents, friends or any other sponsor to pay for college tuition now at a much lower price than it will be in the future. By investing now, these young people will have the equivalent of four year's tuition and

mandatory expenses already paid when they are ready to enter college. The credit may be used at out-of-state schools and private schools as well.

Begun in 1989 by the Alabama Legislature, PACT currently serves 42,000 Alabama children. The trust fund has grown to \$350 million.

Those interested in enrolling or need more information, should call 1-800-252-7228. (PACT)



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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

ATTENTION: The Cincinnati Baptist Association is now accepting resumes for the position of Associational Missionary. The Associational Missionary would oversee Associational staff, offer support for churches and their staffs and direct the area churches in missions. The successful candidate should have a seminary degree, 10 years experience as a pastor and experience with starting new churches. Resumes can be sent to Associational Missionary Search Committee, 735 Reading Road, Mason, Ohio 45040.

POSITION AVAILABLE: Custodial help - full & part time. Please send resume to: Clearview Baptist Church, 5271 Old Springville Road, Pinson, AL 35126. Attn: Personnel Committee. (No phone calls please).

POSITION AVAILABLE: Full-time Minister of Children (birth - Grade 5). Send resume to Personnel Committee, Indian Springs First Baptist Church, 3375 Cahaba Valley Road, Indian Springs, AL 35124.

POSITION AVAILABLE: Mally Baptist Association is seeking a Director of Missions with vision and strong preaching skills. We will accept resumes until 9-15-97. Please mail resumes to: DOM

Search committee, Mally Baptist Association, P.O. Box 50593, Albany, GA 31703. Mally Bapt. Assn. Fax 912-438-8627.

MISCELLANEOUS

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Missionaries work to put 'face' on homosexuality

As long as homosexuals remain a nameless and faceless group, Southern Baptists can choose to ignore the problem that is common in many churches, a husband and wife missionary team said.

"But once we put a face on homosexuality and AIDS, God's work will live through those faces and make us sensitive to the problem," said Fred Loper, who with his wife, Lavada, serve as national missionaries specializing in health care missions for the International Mission Board.

The Lopers, who live in Oklahoma City, were teaching the class, "Hope for Homosexuals," during Black Church Leadership Week at Glorieta (N.M.) Conference Center, Aug. 4-8.

Fred Loper, who is a medical doctor, said homosexuality and AIDS became real for him when he began treating his first AIDS patient in the mid-80s.

"I eventually became friends with this man who made the very moral decision to be sexually abstinent for the rest of his life."

Loper said his work in medical missions required that he speak with people about the symptoms and threats of AIDS.

"That, of course, overlaps with that disease called homosexuality. Lavada and I then had to learn to respond in a Christian way to people involved in homosexual lifestyles."

When churches fail to respond to homosexuality, they miss an

Six reasons for refusal to respond

► **FEAR** — Churches fear losing people who have talents and/or money if they address homosexuality.

► **IGNORANCE** — Churches don't know anything about homosexuality, so they don't discuss it.

► **TABOO** — Homosexuality is not a socially accepted conversation topic, especially in churches.

► **DENIAL** — There is a deep and passionate denial that homosexuality exists in the church.

► **FACELESS** — It remains faceless in many churches.

► **CHANGELESS** — Many believe homosexuals cannot change or be delivered from the lifestyle.

important ministry to a very real group, he said.

"Homosexuality today is for the church what divorce was long ago. People just can't talk about it. We tend to think some sins are worse than others, and sexual sins are among them," he said. "White churches have a horrible time even saying the word sex out loud. When it's not just sex, but homosexuality, it's completely off the list."

Undeliverable sin

"(Churches) believe that people can be delivered from drugs, alcohol or use of pornography, but not from homosexuality," Loper said. "They think God is not powerful enough to take care of that problem."

Loper said he believes if churches understood homosexuality is just another sin, they might

be able to deal with it more effectively.

In 1 Corinthians 4:9-10, sinners are described as sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexual offenders, thieves, greedy, drunkards, slanderers and swindlers, Loper said.

"The church is full of all kinds of people, and Paul's list in those verses doesn't seem to have much priority. The fact is all of us are predisposed to a terrible disease — sin. And it will kill all of us if we are not washed in the blood."

Loper said people are drawn to the homosexual lifestyle for "many, many reasons."

"Homosexuality is a common disease. Some people who are drawn toward their own sex are often just confused — and many times they are teenagers who just feel more attraction for people of their own sex," Loper said.

simple terms, Paulk said, comparing Jesus to someone picking up heavy luggage and taking it on a train for you.

"He asked if I died, would I go to heaven?" John recalled. "I didn't know and it scared me. It drove me to investigate. But I said, 'God can't love me, I'm gay.' Tom said, 'I've known that all along.'"

"He gave me the 'Four Spiritual Laws' and said God could love me as a gay, that being lost didn't depend on being gay but rejecting Christ."

John Paulk
Exodus

He was also touched by Hebrews 5:9: "He (Christ) became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him" (NIV). Suddenly Paulk thought how he wanted to please God with his life.

Soon after, his friends asked him to house-sit during their vacation — another significant step, since they didn't know him well but trusted him.

"I tossed and turned for a week," he said of staying there, "and became so convicted I went home

Loper said, as a member of the medical profession, he has not seen any signs that homosexuality is a genetic predisposition.

"But even it were, there is still hope for beating it," he said. "Some people have a genetic predisposition to alcohol. But they give it up. Some struggle with it every day. Some never struggle after they give it up."

"It would probably be the same for a homosexual who gave up the lifestyle. Homosexuality can be an addiction."

He said some homosexuals he has known have chosen to live a sexually abstinent lifestyle, while others become heterosexual.

"Which ever route a Christian goes, he can choose to live a Christian lifestyle no matter what."

The Lopers offered several resources for homosexuals or those who hope to minister to homosexuals. Those include:

► A video tape, "Hope for the Homosexual." Call 1-800-634-2462 to order.

► CROSS (Created for the Opposite Sex) Ministries — 919-787-3348 — and Walking Together Ministries — 704-274-9408. Both are based in North Carolina.

► First Stone Ministries — 405-236-4673 — is based in Oklahoma City.

► Exodus International North America — 206-784-7799 — is based in Seattle.

For additional ministry information, call Fred and Lavada Loper at 405-528-7688. (BP)

Therapy used to convert gays discouraged

The American Psychological Association adopted a carefully crafted resolution Aug. 14 aimed at discouraging the use of so-called "reparative," or "conversion," therapies that seek to change gays and lesbians to heterosexuals.

But the APA, while saying there is no scientific proof that such therapy works and that there is some potential for harm in its use, did not dismiss the technique altogether. It said the therapy should be used only with "informed consent," requiring psychologists to tell the client that being gay is not an illness and the risks and benefits of conversion therapy remain unknown.

The resolution was sharply criticized by Exodus International, an "ex-gay" Christian ministry, and by the Family Research Council, a conservative advocacy group.

Bob Davies, North American director for the Seattle-based Exodus International, called the resolution a "first step in the wrong direction."

Freedom of choice

"Restricting the freedom of choice for gays seeking change is a very dangerous precedent," Davies added. "Obviously, gays and lesbians who seek change must be self-motivated and not coerced — but 'coercion' to remain gay is equally unethical."

The Family Research Council also criticized the APA's call for therapists to read clients a statement declaring that homosexuality is not an illness and that the benefits of reparative therapy remain unknown.

"Forcing therapists to read any such statement to their clients represents gross interference with therapists' free speech rights, conscience and professional clinical judgment," said Robert Knight, the FRC's director of cultural studies. "Therapists are going to have to lie to their clients and patients about what it means to be gay."

But a spokeswoman for People for the American Way, a Washington-based liberal civil rights organization, welcomed the resolution. "The idea that homosexuality is a condition from which one should be cured is old-fashioned bigotry passing as science," said Judith Schaeffer, deputy legal director of PFAW.

The APA represents some 151,000 researchers, educators and clinicians.

In 1973, overturning decades of psychological conventional wisdom, the APA adopted a resolution declaring that homosexuality is not a mental illness. The new resolution is considered in keeping with that stance. (RNS)

Former homosexual finds Christ through a couple's genuine love

John Paulk still winces when he recalls the anti-homosexual protesters along the parade path of the 1985 "Gay Pride" march in Columbus, Ohio.

Dressed in high heels, white gown and bleached hair, Paulk was riding in a red Corvette convertible driven by his male lover.

As he approached a bridge, chanting opponents held signs like "God Hates Homosexuals" and "Leviticus 3:5-6" — as if he was reading Leviticus in his spare time, he joked. But the banner that really angered him read, "Love the Sinner, Not the Sin."

He thought, "I hate you. Who would want to follow a God like that?" I wonder how many people have felt the same thing. Yet, inside this shell of a person was someone who was lonely, depressed and despondent, wondering if this was all life would amount to."

Befriend, don't condemn

That experience, and the Southern Baptist couple who led him to salvation two years later, convinced Paulk that homosexuals will never be converted by debates over their behavior.

The couple who witnessed to him used to bring Christian materi-

als to the photocopy store where he worked. At first he scoffed, "Oh, yeah, Bible thumpers." But they spent the next year befriending him.

After learning he was ill for an extended period of time, they found out where he lived and showed up with groceries and a freshly baked casserole.

"I can't tell you what that meant to me," said Paulk, now married and the father of a seven-month-old boy. "Nobody had ever given to me without wanting anything in return."

Since they had never mentioned his openly homosexual appearance, he initially thought they were ignorant or stupid. Later he learned Tom and Linda (who don't want their last names used) had been praying God would send homosexuals their way so they could minister to them.

Touched by their gifts during his illness, he agreed to let Tom return to his apartment one day to talk about Christ. His friend spoke in

"God could love me as a gay. ... Being lost didn't depend on being gay but rejecting Christ."

John Paulk
Exodus

and knelt next to my bed and said, 'God, I will give my life to you and turn away from homosexuality and never do it again.'"

Not only did the couple lead him to Christ, they disciplined him and taught him about daily Bible readings. When his first exposure to church left him too nervous to return, they held Sunday morning services at home just for him.

Dealing with the pain

This kind of compassion is how Christians can reach homosexuals, many of whom are dealing with the consequences of considerable hurt, pain and sin, Paulk said.

"The best thing people can do is love them and treat them with respect," said Paulk, who lives in Portland, Ore., and is public relations director for the Exodus coalition of ex-homosexual ministries.

"The best way to deal with it is not hit them with the gospel. Build a relationship with them like you would any sinner in need of Jesus Christ. Surround them with loving care and relationships."

"We can't convince anybody what they're doing is leading to physical and spiritual destruction. It's the same with anybody making a decision for Christ. They have to want it for themselves." (BP)

Amid deep division, Episcopalians elect a liberal leader

PHILADELPHIA — Meeting in historic Christ Church, where the Episcopal Church was organized in 1789, the church's bishops have elected as their leader Chicago Bishop Frank Griswold III, a man who has ordained homosexuals although his denomination has not yet approved that step.

He is thus a revisionist — the polar opposite of a biblically orthodox leader. He leads the church's Standing Liturgical Commission, which just issued a report recommending a series of liturgies to be used in blessing same-sex "marriages." The proposal was voted down in the House of Deputies by a one-vote margin.

Yet he has such a warm, open, gracious manner that most conservative leaders at the church's triennial General Convention were willing to give him the benefit of the doubt, for now.

"We congratulate Bishop Griswold upon his election," said Dallas Bishop James Stanton, president of the conservative umbrella group, the American Anglican Council. "We hope to work with him in the task of strengthening and renewing the Episcopal Church."

John Guernsey, a council board member and a deputy (delegate) to the convention, sounded like a boy with his nose pressed to the window, longing to be invited to the

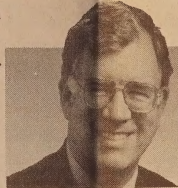
birthday party: "What the Episcopal Church desperately needs is biblically based reconciliation and healing. We are looking to be fully included in the life of our church under Bishop Griswold. We pray that Bishop Griswold will give us hope for such healing."

For 12 years, Griswold's predecessor, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning, has stiff-armed the biblically orthodox, as he did in his final speech, criticizing those who oppose ordaining gay clergy and same-sex "marriages" as being "diverted by fear, and let me name it, by hate" which has come "from the evil from which we daily pray for God's deliverance."

He continued: "Some of the most extreme among us have used the disagreement within our body to foment difficulty and advance themselves and their causes. Surely, this is not of God. . . . It is time to move past using literalistic readings of the Bible to create prejudices against our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters."

Griswold played his role brilliantly, eschewing such stridency and impugning of motives.

In brief remarks to the convention after his election, he



Mike McManus

Ethics & Religion

quoted Bishop Don Helder Camara, a martyred Catholic from Brazil: "The bishop belongs to all," he said. The bishop's door "must be open to everyone, absolutely everyone."

Later, before the press, Griswold recalled that Jesus called Matthew, a tax collector for the Romans, to be one of his disciples as well as Simon the Zealot, who was committed to overthrowing Roman rule, adding, "The truth is larger than any one perspective."

His subliminal message: The church is always divided, but can be led to unity.

Perhaps. But conservatives felt so isolated within the church, that when six candidates were nominated for the presiding bishop position, they could support none. So they nominated one of their own, Ohio Bishop Herbert Thompson, a conservative black evangelical. On the first ballot, Thompson actually led Griswold, 89 to 86, a snapshot of how divided Episcopalians are. Another snapshot: In a House of Bishops debate on whether to authorize rituals for same-sex unions, New Jersey Bishop Joe Morris Doss proposed continued dialogue for three years. A con-

servative bishop asked, if the Doss motion passed, "we would be imposing a moratorium" on same-sex blessings. After a moment of stunned silence, Doss said, "I'll answer the question: No." To his credit, Griswold quickly agreed to meet with the American Anglican Council. He is not a Browning "in-your-face" revisionist. He genuinely wants conservatives to remain within the fold, and may treat them fairly enough that they'll remain involved. But as one deputy put it, "I dread going home and answering my church's question: 'How could you allow this to happen?'" Jon Schuler, general secretary of the North American Missionary Society, which has planted 12 new orthodox Episcopalian churches in four years and is working on 27 more, said, "I find myself unable to take communion at this convention. The church's drift of several decades is now moving rapidly away from a solid foundation in orthodoxy. We are at a major crisis point."

"There is a huge commitment to hang in there. We are family. But with the presiding bishop's ordaining of non-celibate homosexuals, a line has been crossed. This is not the doctrine, discipline and worship of Christ that this church has received."

Mike McManus is the author of Marriage Savers.

You'd be surprised what President Clinton considers 'rich'

Every year *Forbes* magazine has an issue dealing with the rich — the millionaires and billionaires who have the most money that year. Meanwhile, back in Washington, liberals in Congress are also talking about “the rich” whenever anyone wants to lower taxes. Big taxers and big spenders always like to say that there are “tax cuts for the rich.”

The problem is that these two kinds of “rich” people are almost entirely different. Most of the people that the politicians and the media call “the rich” don’t have even a tenth of what it takes to make the *Forbes* list of the rich.

Millions of Americans who would never dream of considering themselves rich are included in the inflated statistics used by the liberals when they claim that tax cuts are for the rich. Notice that liberals seldom tell you how much money it takes to be “rich” by their definition. And when they do tell you, the numbers they use are completely misleading.

The 4 million

According to a Heritage Foundation study, there are more than 4 million mechanics, repairmen and construction workers who meet the Clinton administration’s definition of rich. So do more than 8

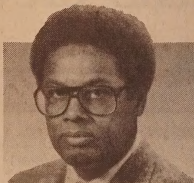
million government employees at federal, state or local levels.

How do people who are making modest middle-class incomes suddenly become “the rich”? Let me count the ways.

First of all, the statistics used include money that these people never receive. These estimates assume that income is being under-reported and add 20 percent to whatever income you report. If you are a homeowner, they also add the amount of rent you would have to pay if you paid rent. Then they add more for the value of your life insurance and the money in your pension funds.

You may not have realized how easy it is to be “rich” in Washington, even if it is very hard to be rich in *Forbes* magazine. Anybody can be rich if you add enough fictitious money to his actual income. As a result, anybody can be a demagogue who gets up in Congress and says that most of the tax cuts are “for the rich.”

Let’s go back to square one. The only people whose



Thomas Sowell

taxes can be cut are people who are paying taxes. Mostly that is the middle class. When these middle-class people are renamed “the rich,” then of course there will be “tax cuts for the rich.”

The misrepresentation does not stop there. The Clinton administration’s insistence that the tax cuts should also apply to “the working poor” was a classic piece of disinformation.

Most very low income families are not paying federal income taxes in the first place. Extending a “tax cut” to them would mean nothing if the words were being used honestly. Used politically, however, what these words mean is that more federal money must be given to them anyway — a handout renamed a “tax cut.”

None of this even gets into the larger question as to whether people making middle-class incomes today have always made middle-class incomes. Many of those who are called “the rich” not only are not rich, they have not even had middle-class incomes all their lives. They just happen to be in the peak earning years of their lives — as many younger people currently in the lower-income brackets will be in later years.

The wife of a prosperous doctor hit the nail on the head when she said she resented people who complained about all the money that doctors make. She asked: “Where were they when we had three children and \$85 in the

bank?”

Most Americans do not start off in a high-income bracket. They work up to it over the years and reach a peak somewhere in their 50s or 60s. That is where most of the high income and most of the wealth in the country is. Census statistics for 1990 show families headed by someone in the 45- to 64-year-old bracket earning nearly double the income of families headed by someone in the 25- to 34-year-old bracket.

The elderly

When it comes to wealth, the disparity is even greater. Census data show the net worth of households headed by someone in the 55 to 64 year old bracket to be several times that of households headed by someone under 35.

Most of the people who are called “the rich” could more accurately be called middle-aged or elderly. They are not a class. They are an age bracket. When they were younger, they were usually in a lower income bracket.

The facts are fairly simple. It is the demagoguery that gets complicated.

Thomas Sowell, currently senior fellow at the Hoover Institution in Stanford, Calif., has been a professor of economics at UCLA, Cornell, Amherst and Brandeis.

NATION/WORLD

Episcopalians gradually accept claims of its large, vocal group of gay activists

By **Greg Garrison**
News staff writer

PHILADELPHIA — Episcopalians wondering which way their denomination is going on the issue of homosexuality got all kinds of clues during the General Convention that ended Friday in the city where the church was born in 1785.

The 2.4-million-member Episcopal Church, which holds its governing convention every three years, has gradually begun to accept the claims of its large and vocal group of homosexual activists calling for respect, equal rights and recognition.

But they have done it gradually in hopes of avoiding a crack in the denomination worse than the one in the Liberty Bell.

So confident are some of those pushing for blessing same-sex couples that there are optimistic predictions

an official rite of blessing could be approved at the next convention, in Denver in 2000.

"They have gotten momentum," said retired Alabama Bishop Furman C. Stough. "Or they may have peaked."

Last week, the convention issued an apology to homosexuals for mistreatment by the church. It let each diocese in the denomination's health plan offer insurance benefits to domestic partners of employees. It rejected, despite significant support, pension benefits for partners of homosexual priests. It narrowly rejected a proposal to write a rite of blessing for same-sex couples but called for a study of the theological basis for one.

"It's been inspirational," said the Rev. Patricia Ackerman, a spokeswoman for the church's gay and lesbian rights lobby, Integrity.

Previously, conservatives at the convention would have been outraged

by this year's events. This time, there seemed to be mostly quiet acquiescence or perhaps growing civility.

"People have settled down; it's much calmer than it's ever been," said the Rev. Douglas Carpenter, rector of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Cahaba Heights.

"There's been a seeming reconciliation," said Bishop Robert O. Miller, head of the Diocese of Alabama.

"I expected more opposition," said the Rev. Michael Hopkins of Integrity, who is confident that even those measures that didn't pass this time will soon. As a 36-year-old gay priest, he's confident that by retirement his partner will be eligible for pension benefits as if he were a spouse.

All the bishops know that same-sex blessings are going on now, just as the ordination of homosexuals goes on without official church approval, said Bishop John Shelby Spong, author of the 1988 book *Living in Sin?* that fueled the issue.

"The church has felt for years that it could vote celibacy for a whole group of people," he said. "Being gay is a given and not a chosen."

The debates on homosexuality began in 1979 and met a brick wall of resistance, Spong said. But by 1994, Spong circulated a document in support of blessing same-sex couples and got 73 of more than 200 bishops to sign. Bishop Frank T. Griswold III of Chicago, a signer of that statement and vocal supporter of homosexual ordination and same-sex blessing ceremonies, was elected last week as the next presiding bishop of the denomination. He will begin a nine-year term in January.

Because Spong, 66, is planning to retire in 2000, he said he intentionally stayed quiet in the debate to see if younger bishops would take up where he left off. They have, he said.

"I'm happy with the way this church has gone," Spong said. "I have not had to jump in at all."

Spong insists that the membership decline and funding crisis in the denomination have nothing to do with changes he advocates. "The church is losing members but I don't think it's because of these issues," Spong said. Even if it were, that's no reason to back off, he said. "The church could never serve something less than the truth."

Miller said he believes the decision to delay developing a same-sex blessing liturgy will please conservatives. "What happens in 2000, I don't know," Miller said. By then, Miller, 62, will be retired and his assistant, Bishop Henry N. Parsley, will be head of the Diocese of Alabama.

Parsley said he's happy the denomination is listening to homosexuals, who need the option of monogamy instead of just celibacy or promiscuity.

Traditionalists did occasionally express their uneasiness. "There will be many priests and lay people who will leave the church because of our ac-

tions this week," said retired Bishop William Sheridan, 80, when allowed to make a farewell speech. "I find that deeply heartbreaking and I'm sure many of you do, too."

Another opponent of women's ordination, homosexual ordination and same-sex couples, Bishop James Stanton of Dallas, spoke out Friday on behalf of the evangelical group, the American Anglican Council.

"We speak not from fear or hatred, and we promote no cause but the transforming power of the risen Christ," he said. "But we speak with a conviction that is as resolute as it is simple."

Perhaps the symbolic, defining action of the convention for the future of the Episcopal Church will be Friday's apology to homosexuals.

"It was a compassionate response, perhaps a little overstated," Parsley said. "I don't think the Episcopal Church has intentionally hurt or rejected anyone."

METRO/STATE

Former senator, Robert T. Wilson, dies

By **Carole Lawes**
News staff writer

Former state Sen. Robert T. Wilson Sr. died of cancer and heart problems Saturday afternoon at his home in Jasper. He was 75.

"We had the opportunity to have some wonderful visits over the last year or so," said Robert T. Wilson Jr., who practiced law with his father and followed his path to politics.

Services will be at 2 p.m. Tuesday at First United Methodist Church in Jasper with burial in Oak Hill Cemetery. The family will receive visitors from 6 to 9 p.m. Monday at Kilgore-Green Funeral Home in Jasper.

Wilson Sr. represented Walker, Cullman, Jefferson, Fayette, Lamar,

Blount and Winston counties in the Alabama Senate. He was first elected in 1962, but did not run in 1966. He won in 1970 and 1974.

"Although he never sought election to other public office after that, he remained very active in state and national politics," his son said.

In 1972, Mr. Wilson nominated George Wallace for president at the Democratic National Convention. He led Alabama's delegation to the 1976 Democratic National Convention.

Mr. Wilson was the son of a coal miner. He was born April 23, 1922, in Dora. He graduated from Walker High School. He was a tail gunner in World War II, and after the war attended the University of Alabama. He received his law degree in 1950.

He returned to Jasper to practice

law. In 1959 he and his brother, retired Circuit Judge James E. Wilson, formed the firm of Wilson & Wilson. He practiced law until his death.

Wilson Jr., who also served in the state Senate and who ran for U.S. Congress from the 4th District, said his father was an inspiration.

"I think the trait that I admired most in my dad was his unselfish character and his love of all of God's children. When Jesus taught us to feed the poor and the hungry and clothe the naked and witness to the multitudes, Dad was the type of disciple that put that instruction in motion," he said.

The younger Wilson said he and his father talked about his loss in the congressional race and the opportunities they had, practicing law together,

through his father's illness.

"I think the Good Lord has plans that we can't see from this earth," he said. "I think if I had been in Wash-

ington, I would have been torn back and forth between my duties and trying to spend time here with him."

He is survived by his wife, Ruth

McDaniel Wilson; his son; two daughters, Sue Wilson Stough of Jasper and Sally Wilson DeWitt of Riverchase; and four grandchildren.

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By: Robert Reece

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charged with murder in the Tuesday night shooting death of Dr. Harold Autrey, 65. The shooting occurred at Autrey's mobile home on Alabama 185, said Butler County Sheriff Diane Harris.

Fort Deposit police were the first to arrive at the scene.

The Alabama Baptist

Convention president Lackey most of all a pastor

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Dale: Leadership must incorporate sound stance, style, strategy

To be effective, leadership must be sound at three levels, Baptist scholar Bob Dale told a gathering of church leaders Oct. 2.

Dale, director of the Center for Creative Church Leadership Development in Richmond, Va., spoke at a Baptist Center for Ethics conference on Church Growth with Leadership Integrity in Charlotte, N.C.

Dale, a former seminary professor who since 1989 has served on the staff of the Baptist General Association of Virginia, described three "building blocks" for leadership. The foundation for leadership is the "stance" that underlies "styles" and "strategy," he said.

"Good leaders are going to have to pay more and more attention to building a stance for leadership," Dale said. "Servanthood, I think, is a stance."

Styles of leadership can emphasize "mission" or "morale," he said, noting that Baptist seminaries have often neglected the lat-

ter. Baptists "are good at dealing with mission; we are not good at dealing with morale," he said.

Balance mission, morale

"I want to suggest to you that our style of leadership is a balance of mission and morale," he said.

Strategy, Dale said, is "the most artistic form of leadership."

"Strategy is what you do when you realize you can't be two places at one time," he said, "when you realize you have more opportunities than you have resources."

In a forthcoming book, *Leading Edge: Leadership Strategies from the New Testament*, Dale studied leadership strategies in the New Testament. He noted transition in strategies used as the early church matured.

"Jesus was a highly focused leader," Dale said. "He didn't take on too many things. He just tried to bring in the kingdom of God."

Taking a key from that exam-

ple, Dale said, "The first thing you and I have to determine is what will I give my attention to, what will I be zealous about."

In the book of Acts, leadership was marked by flexibility, Dale noted. "Every time the Holy Spirit opened the door, they were quick to move through."

Leadership strategies took a different focus, however, by the time pastoral epistles were written, Dale said.

When the early church turned into "an establishment," he observed, its leaders "all of a sudden stopped playing offense as they had in the book of Acts and started playing defense."

The writers of the epistles emphasized "negative verbs" in their admonitions, like "rebuke," "fight back," and "guard against," Dale noted.

Dale observed that leading established churches poses a special challenge. "When we become the establishment, we become so engrossed in protecting our pres-

A SEVEN-POINT AGENDA FOR CHURCH LEADERS TO ACT ETHICALLY

as listed by Robert Parham, director of the Baptist Center for Ethics

Be positive: be for something rather than against something all the time

Be proactive: take an initiative and take a risk sometimes

Act with your neighbors in mind: they are in the boat with you

Act today for tomorrow: make forward-looking decisions

Sometimes do nothing: it may be the best thing to do

Be civil: state your own position without bashing your opponents

Play: rest and relax lest the task of Christian living become a burden

ent and our past we run risk of losing the future," Dale said.

A final shift emerged in the book of Revelation, one of only two biblical books written when Christianity was in danger of annihilation, Dale said. Leadership in that era offered "encouragement" and an appeal to return to the basics of the gospel, he said.

Dale said a cultural shift from

an industrial society to one characterized by information redefines the task of leadership from "making things" to "making sense."

"In an information age, we are what we understand," Dale said. "The leader is not the person at the front of the room. The leader is the person who can help people make sense." (ABP)

Historical Highlights FROM 'THE ALABAMA BAPTIST'

50 Years Ago - October 1945

COOSA RIVER ASSOCIATION: Coosa River Association convened at Hepzibah Baptist Church, a beautiful rural church situated on a hill in a grove of oaks. Leon Spain is pastor of the church and also clerk of the association. Pastor Perry Claxton of First Baptist Church, Talladega, is moderator of the association, and in his opening address he gave much historical information referring to a sermon preached before the association 62 years ago by Samuel Henderson, who was at that time editor of *The Alabama Baptist*.

40 Years Ago - October 1955

MUD CREEK ASSOCIATION: Mud Creek Association met at Mud Creek Baptist Church, established in 1837 and one of the oldest churches in the state. The present building was dedicated in 1906 and has the Masonic Lodge in the second story, this being very common among the churches in the early days. It is a full-time church with J. W. Simmons serving as its pastor. Eighteen churches in the association have *The Alabama Baptist* in their budgets with two sending to each resident family.

30 Years Ago - October 1965

WALKER ASSOCIATION: An unusually large crowd attended the first day's session of the Walker Association meeting in the beautiful Northside Baptist Church at Jasper. Ray Felkins, pastor of First Baptist Church, Parrish, served as moderator, and Fred Lackey, pastor at Westside, brought an excellent message during the session.

20 Years Ago - October 1975

PICKENS ASSOCIATION: Pickens Baptist Association met in its 140th annual session at Arbor Springs Baptist Church which celebrates 103 years of existence this year. Fourteen of the 32 churches in the association are 125 years old or more. First Baptist Church, Aliceville, is the oldest. It came into being in 1823, the same year the Alabama Baptist State Convention was organized.

10 Years Ago - October 1985

MONTGOMERY ASSOCIATION: Buddy C. McGohon, pastor of South Avondale Baptist Church in Birmingham, has been called as director of missions for the Montgomery Baptist Association, effective Nov. 1.

—Compiled by Kathleen V. Prude

Conference speaker offers points on handling conflict

Conflict is inevitable in the church, according to Dave Odom, a specialist in helping congregations resolve conflict.

"The definition of peace is not the absence of conflict," said Odom, director of the Center for Congregational Health in Winston-Salem, N.C. Odom led a session on conflict resolution during the Baptist Center for Ethics conference on "Church Growth with Leadership Integrity."

Ministers often are the last to admit that conflict has risen to dangerous levels, Odom said. And even laypeople often deny the presence of conflict in the church, he added.

Odom outlined a process that conflict often follows in churches and noted some conflicts can be thwarted by facing them head-on as they arise. As conflicts elevate to higher levels, the chance of avoiding long-term damage decreases, he noted.

The first step to resolving conflict is to understand that different people employ different styles of conflict management, Odom said. He outlined five styles identified by Speed Leas:

► **Persuade.** The persuader assumes that the other person is simply ignorant or incorrect and needs to be changed. This assumes that with enough persuasion, the other person will change positions.

► **Compel.** The compeller uses the force of authority to demand compliance.

► **Avoid/accommodate.** This style, which Odom said is the most common for ministers, leads a person to stay out of the

conflict, either actively or passively. While such a style is appropriate sometimes, it is dangerous at other times, he said.

► **Collaborate.** The collaborator gets everybody together to look for a "win-win" solution. But Odom said such an outcome may not be possible in every situation.

► **Negotiate.** The negotiator employs a strategy similar to the collaborator, but doesn't look for a "win-win" solution. In this model, no one gets everything they want, but some resolution is achieved.

► **Support.** The supporter merely listens to the conflict without offering any solution or direction. This is the style most often employed by counselors, Odom said.

Each of these styles of conflict management may be appropriate in certain settings, he said. The effective leader will know how to adapt to the circumstances and not remain stuck in one style, he explained.

The simplest way to manage conflict is to keep it at the most basic level or move it back to that basic level, Odom said. This basic level focuses on "we have a problem to solve" rather than on personalities and side issues.

Odom advises writing out a "workable problem statement" as the guide to solving the problem at hand. This statement must be free of blame, specific and descriptive, not have to do with the distant past, not be a "put down" of any involved party and must be agreed to by all involved as a definition of the problem.

The Center for Congregational Health, which Odom directs, is a ministry of North Carolina Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem. The center offers consulting services to all churches in the Jewish and Christian tradition to help congregations understand their identity, clarify their mission and resolve conflict. (ABP)

Money received to help in disasters

The Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions is receiving money to help victims of disasters. Alabama Baptists currently are engaged in disaster relief work in at least three Alabama cities — Enterprise, Luverne, and Tuskegee — and at St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Disaster relief units been assigned to Enterprise, Luverne, and Tuskegee, where volunteers are preparing meals for victims of Hurricane Opal. Volunteers on St. Croix are using a mobile kitchen to prepare meals for victims of Hurricane Marilyn. The work is coordinated by the board's Brotherhood Department.

If you would like to contribute to disaster relief efforts, make checks payable to the State Board of Missions, mark them "Disaster Relief," and mail them to: Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief, P.O. Box 11870, Montgomery, AL 36111-0870.

Alabama missionaries honored upon retirement

Alabamians were among more than 75 retiring missionaries who were honored by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in a recognition service Oct. 9 at the First Baptist Church of Richmond, Va.

Among the honorees (listed with their Alabama ties) were the following:

► **Phillip M. and Martha Brandon Anderson** served in the Philippines. He was born in Sheffield, considers Florence his hometown, graduated from Florence State College, and served on staff at Cullman First Baptist Church and Vestavia Hills Baptist Church in Birmingham. She was born in Reform, considers Florence her hometown, graduated from Florence State College, and served as campus minister at Jefferson State Junior College.

► **Robert C. and Gerry Smith Covington** served in Malaysia, Australia, and Singapore. He was born in Brewton, considers Montgomery his hometown, graduated from the University of



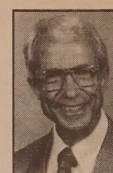
THE ANDERSONS



THE COVINGTONS



THE GIBSONS



THE HUNTS



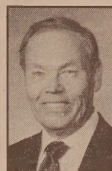
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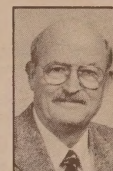
THE JONESES



THE McCLELLANDS



THE MCKINLEYS



THE WHITSONS



Alabama, and was a Samford extension teacher and pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist in Carbon Hill. Born in Gadsden, she earned degrees from the University of Alabama and considers Birmingham her hometown.

► **Fred M. and Mary Ella Bowers Gibson** served in Singapore. He was born in Selma and graduated from Marion Military Institute.

► **Archie V. and Caroline McManus Jones** served in Chile. She grew up in Montgomery and

graduated from Troy State University.

► **Martha Hagood** served in Japan and Nigeria. She was born in Oxford and considers Columbia her hometown. She is a graduate of Howard College and the Medical College of Alabama and served as a physician at Birmingham-area hospitals.

► **Bob W. and Rosalie Hall Hunt** served in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Australia, India, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines. He was born in Albertville, gradu-

ated from Howard College, served as associate pastor and youth minister at Boaz First Baptist, and was a summer missionary in Randolph Baptist Association. She is a graduate of Jacksonville State University and the University of Montevallo.

► **C.W. and Vertie Pitts McClelland** served in Rhodesia and South Africa. He was formerly pastor of Friendship Baptist Church in Bon Secour and a public school teacher in Foley. She

served as a practical nurse and as a substitute teacher in Foley.

► **Hugh T. and Rebecca Knott McKinley** served in Zimbabwe (formerly known as Rhodesia). He was born in Birmingham.

► **David H. and Betty Ann Clark Whitson** served in Tanzania. He was born in Bankston, attended the University of Alabama and Livingston State Teachers College, and served as an assistant pastor in Shawmut. She taught school in Shawmut.

(Compiled by The Alabama Baptist)

FMB trustees endorse plan for former communist countries

Trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board Oct. 11 endorsed a bold plan to seize emerging op-

portunities for the gospel created by the collapse of communism in the former Soviet Union.

To take advantage of these op-

portunities, trustees are asking Southern Baptists to participate in "White Harvest '96" by meeting an ambitious \$100 million goal for the 1995 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

During their Oct. 9-11 meeting in Richmond, Va., trustees approved a \$202.6 million budget for 1996 that injects \$10 million into an intensive effort in the countries of the former Soviet bloc. Trustees earmarked \$90 million of the upcoming 1995 Lottie Moon offering goal for the board's basic budget and the additional \$10 million for White Harvest.

Total force now 4,131

The board also conferred emeritus status on 77 retiring missionaries, appointed 25 new missionaries, and reappointed four others, bringing the total missionary force to 4,131.

White Harvest money would follow a special infusion into the region this year of \$4.8 million from the Cooperative Program, the Southern Baptist unified giving program.

Last year trustees pledged to use in the former Soviet bloc up to \$5 million of Cooperative Program receipts above 1995 budget needs. In early October, FMB officials learned a year of record giving by Southern Baptists would result in an extra \$4.8 million.

Seventy years of communist repression devastated Baptist work in countries dominated by the Soviet Union, said John Floyd, director of FMB work in Europe. The collapse of the Soviet Union reopened doors for the gospel.

FMB staff and trustees "feel like we have to hit that area in a hurry... because there are doors open to us that have never been open before," said Gene Dykes, an FMB trustee and a member of the First Baptist Church of Center Point, Birmingham Association.

Dykes, who attended his second FMB meeting as a new trustee, said he was pleased with the session. "It was a great meeting... I am very pleased with the complete sincerity of the staff and the other trustees. I can assure everyone that they have our missionaries completely at heart," said Dykes, who is president of Shook and Fletcher Mechanical Contractors.

The \$4.8 million from the Cooperative Program and the \$10 million projected from the 1995 Lottie Moon offering will buy houses and automobiles for new FMB missionaries pouring into the newly-open countries. It will fund evangelism projects, new church starts, literature production, strategic land purchases, church construction and renovation and theological education, Floyd said.

The annual Lottie Moon offering will provide 46 percent, a projected \$90 million, of the board's 1996 basic budget. To supply the \$10 million needed in the former Soviet bloc, Woman's Missionary Union and Foreign Mission Board leaders have challenged Southern Baptists to give \$100 million through the offering.

3.4 percent increase

Apart from the \$10 million for White Harvest '96, the \$192.6 million basic budget represents a 3.4 percent increase over 1995, said Carl Johnson, vice-president for finance. Overseas work will get 87.2 percent of the budget.

Missionary support accounts for 70 percent of the \$6.4 million increase in the budget, Johnson said. Record numbers of new missionaries, rising living costs and a weak dollar have dramatically raised the cost of supporting the missionaries in 131 countries.

Board members also considered a proposal to cut costs by reducing the number of trustees from 89 to 55 through a new formula, implemented by attrition, that allocates one trustee position to each state and additional positions for each 500,000 members of Baptist churches in a state. The trustees voted to delay action on the proposal until their Dec. 11-13 meeting in Memphis, Tenn.

(Compiled by The Alabama Baptist)



HEADED FOR SPAIN — Fifty-one Alabama Baptists left Oct. 11 for two weeks of evangelistic mission in Spain, an effort coordinated by Spanish Baptists, the Foreign Mission Board, and Harper Shannon, director of evangelism for Alabama Baptists. Among those departing from Birmingham were, from left: Billy Abrams, Cedar Grove Baptist, Leeds; Gene Zeiger, First Baptist, Pell City; Asa Couch, New Georgia Baptist, Birmingham; and Evan Zeiger, First Baptist, Pell City. (Photo by Johnnie Sentell)

COMMENT

Angels Are a Hot Topic

Angels are a hot topic these days. Two of the top 10 best selling hardback religious books for October deal with angels. *Angels Don't Die* is in seventh place according to *Publishers Weekly*. *Angel Days* is in eighth. Most major news magazines have devoted feature stories and cover art to the phenomenon of belief in angels. Angels are even the subject of a current TV show.

In fact, *Touched by an Angel*, aired on Saturday evenings by CBS, is good, wholesome television, in my judgment. Monica, Tess, and Henry, the three angels of the show, help people know that God loves them.

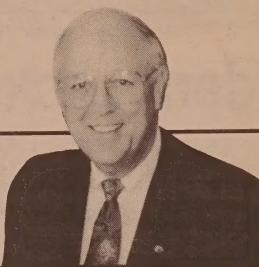
One week it may be a neurotically driven person striving for perfection. The next, a person who must learn to forgive others. The story line may be about an individual who needs to forgive himself. In each case, the angels are there helping the characters know that God loves them.

Most of us have heard testimonies about God's miraculous intercession in the lives of people. Sometimes the intercession is attributed to angels. Stories may be about protection in times of trouble or guidance in the midst of confusion. The stories might be about healing or about strength in times of weakness.

As many situations as there are in life, that is how many testimonies there are about God's intervention in behalf of His people. Maybe that is why we talk about having "guardian

THOUGHTS

by Bob Terry



angels" or "being watched over by angels." It is a way of expressing God's love and care for His people.

Each story may be true, but it is not God's intervention in a life, whether through an angel or not, that helps us know of God's love. God's love is best seen in Jesus Christ and His death on Calvary's cross.

It was on the cross that Jesus became the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." He gave Himself a ransom for many. He shed His blood that there might be forgiveness of sin. Jesus paid the price for man's wrongs.

Logic would say that man's disobedience to God, man's sin, causes God to be angry with man. The Bible says otherwise. The Bible says God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. The Bible says Jesus came into the

world "not to condemn the world but that the world, through Him, might be saved."

"Whosoever believeth on Him (Jesus) might be saved," declared the writer of John. Other New Testament writers agree. The apostle Peter declared, "He Himself (Jesus) bore our sins in His body on the cross . . . for by His wounds we are healed." The apostle Paul said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

If one wants to know that God loves him or her, one has only to look at the cross of Calvary. On the cross Jesus testified to all that heaven's gates are not shut to them. The gates are open wide, as wide as the arms of Jesus as He hung on the cross.

On the cross God proved His love for mankind, for each human being, in a way that cannot be doubted. He took man's place and paid the price for man's sin.

On television, Monica can magically appear each week and tell the feature character that God loves that one. There might even be events in our lives that cannot be explained outside of the intervening hand of God. But no words and no experience can show the depth of God's love for us like the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Maybe instead of talking about angels and the messages they bring, we all would do better to talk more about the cross and the love it demonstrates.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ON FORCED ABORTIONS

Linda Montgomery should be commended. She is absolutely right. It has become such an abominable practice — a group speaking out as though they were speaking for all people. She disagreed with the women at the China conference speaking out, purporting to speak for all women. It is an easy mistake to make. Everyone thinks the group to which he or she belongs is the one with all the right answers.

She mentioned that forced abortion was decreed at the China conference. She said that "any abortion is 'forced abortion.'" In her zeal for her devotion to the cause, she may not be aware that the source of her information was not accurate.

Quite a lot of the materials being put out now are not written by scientists and medical doctors. Material from the doctors who deal with such tragedies would have given a different insight. It has been known for sometime that some 20 percent of the pregnancies end in spontaneous abortions, usually during the first two weeks of pregnancy. Doctors think the percentage may run as high as 50 percent. Usually these embryos are chromosomally unsound and would end in a seriously deformed fetus if the mother's body did not naturally abort. Other causes, too, such as, diseases, placenta problems, trauma may cause spontaneous abortions. Spontaneous abortions are called miscarriages. These subjects are new to our public.

The wide and diversified coverage of *The Alabama Baptist* make each issue an exciting look at the important things happening, both at home and abroad. After

what I wrote in the first paragraph, I can't speak for all Alabama Baptists, but I would guess that quite a lot of us really are enthused about the "new" *Alabama Baptist*. I enjoyed the old *Alabama Baptist*, but this is better. So alive to the present and God's love throughout!

Paulinea K. Robillard
Auburn, Ala.

A MOVING EXPERIENCE

Recently I had the privilege of attending a Home Mission board commissioning service for new missionaries at First Baptist Church, Alpharetta, Ga. I was in the Atlanta area at the invitation of the Associational Missions Division to assist in the orientation of new directors of missions from across the convention.

At the conclusion of the service Dr. Larry Lewis gave an invitation for any in the audience to come forward to pray for and with the new missionaries. Several of the new appointees went forward to kneel in prayer. Among them were two African-American couples; Cleophus and Ethel Rawls, appointed to Black Church Extension in East St. Louis, Ill., and Dagogo and Lily Benson-Jaja, appointed to church and community ministries in Savannah, Ga.

As I stood praying with the congregation, I observed one of the most moving demonstrations of Christian love and commitment I have ever witnessed. Dr. Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, who was on stage as a part of the commissioning service; quietly and generally unobserved, moved to the floor of the auditorium, dropped to her knees and em-

braced first one, and then the other of the women missionaries, obviously praying with and encouraging them in their search for guidance.

It was one of the most moving and emotional experiences I have ever had in my nearly 45 years of ministry and mission service. In a time where there are some who have raised questions about the motives and agenda of Southern Baptist leaders, such as Dr. O'Brien, it was an affirmation of the depth of commitment of one of God's choice servants. Thank God that we have leaders like her and countless thousands of others who have made our convention God's instrument for missions and evangelism in our world.

H.T. "Tommy" Karn
Director of Missions
Savannah River Baptist Association
Ridgeland, S.C.

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Baptists continue ministry efforts in Opal's wake

By Keith Hinson
The Alabama Baptist

More than a week after Hurricane Opal came ashore and blew through the state on Oct. 4, Alabama Baptists are continuing cleanup and ministry efforts in the aftermath.

Volunteers at two key disaster relief units were continuing to prepare meals at sites in south Alabama.

A unit owned by the Baptist State Board of Missions has continued operating on the grounds of the Enterprise First Baptist Church.

A unit owned by Morgan Association spent several days in McKenzie before being scheduled to move to Laverne on Oct. 17.

The move will allow the unit to serve a larger number of counties, including Crenshaw, Coffee, Covington, Conecuh, Pike, and Butler, according to Steve Stephens, associate in the SBOM Brotherhood Department.

An additional unit was established in Tuskegee on Wednesday, Oct. 11. The Tuskegee-based unit is owned by Kilpatrick Baptist Association, which is located

in the area around Augusta, Ga.

Operating the three units has incurred very little cost to the State Board of Missions since the Red Cross provides all food, which is prepared by volunteers.

Stephens estimated that 106 volunteers from various parts of Alabama and 20 volunteers from out of state have been involved in the operation of the feeding units. More than 90 percent of the volunteers had previously received special training, Stephens noted.

Emmette Jones, a member of Millbrook Baptist Church and on-site coordinator for the Enterprise unit, said his site has served more than 34,000 meals.

"Going great"

"Everything is going great," said Jones, who noted that no feeding actually takes place at the Enterprise church. Instead Red Cross ERVs (emergency response vehicles) transport the food to places — often in other counties — where the meals are distributed.

The Enterprise unit prepares food twice daily, often exceeding 3,000 total meals. A sample menu

might include beef stew, rice, lima beans, sliced peaches, bread, and a drink, Jones said.

Cold meals are also prepared, Jones said, because "people get tired of a heavy meal all the time, and it gives them a break." A cold meal menu may include include sandwiches, snacks, and drinks such as milk.

Even as electrical power has been restored to most homes and business affected, the free meals are still needed, said Stephens.

"People who live from paycheck to paycheck are not getting a paycheck today," said Stephens, who was interviewed by *The Alabama Baptist* on Friday, Oct. 13.

Stephens noted that many businesses were closed during power outages and that as a result many employees were not paid.

It will take quite some time for families who miss a paycheck or two to recover financially, Stephens suggested.

Jones and Stephens could not be certain how much longer the three units would operate but indicated a likelihood the meal preparation could continue through the week of Oct. 15.

The Alabama Baptist contacted several associational offices to ask about damage and impact on the state's churches:

► **Elmore Association.** James Jackson, director of missions, said several churches were damaged by the effects of the hurricane.

Mount Hebron West Baptist Church had some damage to their steeple and extensive water damage to the church's sanctuary carpet.

Riverside Heights Baptist Church had minor damage to its steeple and some water damage in the basement.

Rock Springs Baptist Church had a tree fall on its fellowship hall, which caused damage that was "pretty extensive," Jackson said.

Titus Baptist Church had damage to its fellowship hall and choir room, because of a fallen tree, Jackson said. The tree created an eight-foot hole, "large enough to drive a car through," Jackson said.

Prospect Baptist Church had "small damage" when an electrical pole fell, pulling an electrical box and some wires out from the church building.

Meeting postponed

► **East Liberty Association.** The annual meeting of the association, which was scheduled for Oct. 10, was postponed until Oct. 24, said Charles Wynn, director of missions. Bethel Baptist, which will be host church for this year's meeting, was still without power on Oct. 10, Wynn said.

Several churches had minor damage, such as County Line and Antioch, both of which suf-

Volunteers needed for storm cleanup

In the wake of Hurricane Opal, the Brotherhood Department of the Baptist State Board of Missions is keeping two lists: "those willing to help and those needing help," said Steve Stephens, SBOM Brotherhood associate.

Stephens said there is a special need to help remove fallen trees from the yards of elderly homeowners. "In some cases," Stephens said, "if we don't do it, they may never have it done."

The need for volunteer labor is obvious, said Stephens, noting a special need for volunteers who have trucks, chain saws, or vehicles with four-wheel drive. Stephens encouraged would-be volunteers to be patient. At present, the calls offering help are exceeding the number of calls from people asking for help.

However Stephens said he anticipates an increasing number of calls for help in the next few weeks as insurance companies finish their work with policyholders and as associational directors of missions become aware of particular needs.

"We do a lot of networking with directors of missions and associations," Stephens said. "They will line up some people to help with those who need help."

To volunteer or to ask for assistance, people may call the Red Cross, associational offices, or the Brotherhood Department. The number for the department, which is located in the Baptist Building in Montgomery, is (800) 264-1225.

(Donations are being received for disaster relief. See page 6.)

ferred roof damage, Wynn said. Sunset Heights had Sunday School but postponed its 50th anniversary celebration and cancelled evening services.

Public appeal

The association's Christian Service Center ran out of food, Wynn said. "We've had to make a public appeal over one of the radio stations to raise money and food. It's been pretty successful," he said. "Our goal is to have an 18-wheeler full of food."

► **Salem-Troy Association.** White Rock Baptist Church had three trees on its roof and one in the church's cemetery. Five oak trees, nearly 100 years old, fell in the church yard, said Harold Wicks, director of missions. The roof and ceiling tiles were damaged at Shady Grove Baptist Church, and Calvary Baptist in Troy had a metal storage building damaged after eight trees fell in the church yard.

► **Coffee Association.** The associational office and some churches — such as New Brockton First — lost shingles, said Joel Jackson, director of missions. Two churches, Woodland Grove and Union Grove, had steeples blown off. A tree fell on a fence around the swimming pool at the association's Vineyard retreat center. Hillcrest Baptist Church had water damage in its music room from a roof that leaked after shingles were blown away, Jackson said.

► **Conecuh Association.** Long Branch Baptist Church lost some shingles and suffered damage to one its rooms, said Tommy White, director of missions. A tree fell on the pasturism of Jones Chapel Baptist Church, White said. Brooklyn Baptist Church postponed homecoming activities, which were scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 8, said White,

but added that the church had services anyway.

► **Dale Association.** Lois Cavitt, associational secretary, said some churches lost shingles, awnings, and siding.

► **Clarke Association.** The only church reporting any damage was Jackson First Baptist, where a tree fell on the church's auxiliary building, according to Jack R. Wright, director of missions. Antioch, Grove Hill, and Jackson First opened their buildings as shelters.

► **Escambia Association.** Greg Saylor, director of missions, said Alco Baptist Church received minor damage to its roof with not much structural damage to other churches.

► **Carey Association and Clay Association.** According to Pete Phillips, director of missions for both associations, a few churches did not have services on Sunday because of power outages, but he had not received any reports of structural damage to churches.

► **Autauga Association.** Wynette Cox, associational secretary, said the office had received no reports of storm damage to churches. Cox said Prattville First Baptist was out of power until Friday afternoon, which necessitated bringing their bulletin to the associational office to have it typed.

► **Bullock-Centennial Association.** Barney Ferguson, director of missions, reported that Union Springs First Baptist served as a shelter for a total of 113 people, including 20 from out of state.

► **Geneva Association.** Dicky McAllister, director of missions, said no trees fell on churches but some churches lost shingles.

► **Russell Association.** Seale Baptist lost shingles, and at least one church cancelled Sunday services, according to associational sources.

Church shares supper with Opal's refugees, donations with world's hungry

Like most south Alabama churches on Oct. 4, Camden Baptist Church cancelled its mid-week services as Hurricane Opal approached the Gulf Coast.

Yet the same Wednesday night — with services cancelled — the church received more than \$1,000 in donations that it later gave to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Offering.

After calling off services, Camden Baptist found itself with a lot of food that had already been prepared for its Wednesday night supper: roast beef, mashed potatoes, and green beans.

As usual when roast is on the menu, the meat had been prepared a day earlier by a local company, according to the church's pastor, Eddie Davidson.

With lots of food and virtually no one to serve it to, church staffers called area police, civil defense, and several motels, which were heavily booked. The message was simple: Send people to Camden Baptist for shelter and for a free meal.

A local Christian radio station, WMBV, helped notify people driving automobiles in the slow-crawling line of traffic that had made its way from points south.

About 112 refugees from the storm came to Camden Baptist for food and shelter, Davidson said. Only five people were from the local area. Many were from Florida, and some were visitors from other states, such as Missouri and Kentucky.

Unsolicited offering

The visitors to the church were so grateful for the food and shelter that virtually all of them left an offering of some amount, totally unsolicited, Davidson said.

At the end of the crisis, more than \$1,000 had been donated by the guests. The next Sunday, Oct. 8, was World Hunger Sunday in the Southern Baptist Convention, so the church decided to donate the money to the SBC World Hunger Offering.

Assisting Davidson were the church's minister of music, Wil Philpot, and the church secretary, Jeannie Newsom, who worked and stayed at the church all night to ensure the comfort and safety of the refugees sleeping in the sanctuary.

The church's basement, where the evening meal was served, was flooded, but the next morning Philpot and Newsom stood in the water as they cooked pancakes and eggs for their guests. The visitors were delighted with the meal they were served in the flooded basement. Everyone largely ignored any inconvenience or discomfort created by the water, Davidson said.

"The people had a good time and were glad to be there under the circumstances," Davidson noted. "We had plenty of food, and it was a real blessing."

Food-and-clothing center in Shelby Association helps hundreds in need

By Laurie A. Lattimore
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Hurricane Opal was expected to hit southeast Alabama during the afternoon of Oct. 4. All Columbiana schools were closed. Traffic was a mess, and the rain was coming down hard. Downtown offices appeared abandoned.

All except one. The Food and Clothing Center — located at the First Baptist Church of Columbiana — was trying to close too, but there were needs to meet. Four mothers sat with their children while volunteers rushed back and forth filling bags of canned goods, toiletries, and clothes.

Debbie Snyder, director of the center, handed one mother a bag full of clothes for her two children. Her son tore into a shoebox with his new "Air Jordan" Nike tennis shoes. "This is all we have in these sizes right now," Snyder said. "We'll try to get you some more next time."

The center has met a real need in the small community 20 miles southeast of Birmingham. Columbiana is on the east side of Shelby County where fewer resources for services exist.

Snyder said the west side has a greater concentration of churches with established benevolence ministries plus programs like Red Cross, Salvation Army, or United

Way. In Columbiana and surrounding county seat towns, there were no places for people in need to get emergency food and clothing until two years ago when the 52 Shelby Association churches banded together to open a center. Columbiana First donated a building on its property plus hours of free labor to open the center.

"We really started with a bang," said Snyder, who also is the church and community ministries director for the association. "We are located in the heart of a great area of need."

While Shelby County has a lot of wealth, Snyder said there are many pockets of poverty. Before the center opened, low-income families had to travel for as much as an hour for assistance. Because so many do not have transportation, Snyder said they were often unable to receive help.

Since its opening in October 1993, the center has been helping from 125 to 200 families each month. Association churches donate clothes and food or money to purchase bulk goods at the United Way Food Bank, Snyder said.

The center is open two mornings each week and is run by volunteers.

People can come up to three times a year for clothes and sacks of food to provide a week's worth of balanced meals, but there are



JIMMY JONES



RUBY HIGGINBOTHAM



DEBBIE SNYDER

some exceptions for people with extended needs.

The center does not have the financial resources to help people pay bills, but occasionally Snyder contacts a church in the area to follow up. Each person who asks for help is interviewed individually to determine the needs of his/her family.

Emergency help

"We're not trying to duplicate federal programs like food stamps. We're here to serve as emergency help and aid with chronic needs such as elderly people on a fixed income," Snyder said. The center helps between one and five families a month who are suddenly without food and clothes because of a fire or some other major catastrophe. For example, many people lost power for three or more days following Hurricane Opal's path through Alabama, so much of their refrigerated food spoiled.

Many visitors to the center are

people who fail to qualify for federal or state-funded programs, but they still do not make enough money to provide for their families.

"A lot of times people fall through the cracks with other community help programs and they need help for a month or so," Snyder said, noting that many state agencies have strict regulations on who can receive help because of private donations or government restrictions. "We can fill a need, because there are many deserving people who do not qualify for help other places but still have needs not being met."

Jimmy Jones, pastor of Four Mile Baptist Church in Wilsonville and a volunteer at the center, said the center is helpful for people suddenly thrust into a situation of need. "A lot of people who come here are not used to being in the position they are in," he said. "If we can help get them back, we are meeting a great need."

Ruby Higginbotham, a member at Four Mile and a volunteer at the center almost since its opening, said many people are distraught when they come in. She believes the Christian attitude exemplified at the center is one reason why most are so appreciative of the help.

"This is such a Christian ministry," she said. "We treat them with respect, so they know we are Christian-minded."

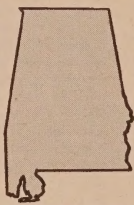
Snyder said the center gave out more than 7,500 sacks of food last year and served people more than 1,300 times. "This is a wonderful ministry. It is such a wonderful opportunity to touch hundreds of lives," she said.

Jones noted that occasionally people visit a local church because of the help they have received, but that is not the motivation for helping.

"I feel the Lord has blessed so much us, and in return this is a way to help Him," he said.

STATE NEWS BRIEFS

YOUR NEWS IS IMPORTANT TO THE ALABAMA BAPTIST AND TO THE BAPTISTS OF ALABAMA. FOR PUBLICATION IN THIS SECTION, INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIAL EVENTS NEEDS TO REACH US AT LEAST TWO WEEKS BEFORE THEY OCCUR, AND STAFF CHANGES SHOULD BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY.



FOREST HILLS Baptist, Birmingham, dissolved its church membership and sold church property to another congregation. Profits from the sale benefited several ministries, including the ALCAP, Alabama Citizens Action Program. The \$20,000 endowment to ALCAP will be handled by the Baptist Foundation of Alabama.

PHILADELPHIA Baptist, Birmingham, will host "Hope for the Heart," a women's conference, Oct. 21-22. Saturday session at 6 p.m., Sunday sessions are during regular worship hours. The conference will be led by Christian singer, speaker, and author Renee Coates Scheidt.

MIDLAND CITY Baptist, Midland City, celebrated its centennial on Sept. 17. The church printed a history and a cookbook in honor of the occasion, and a time capsule containing church memorabilia was buried and will be opened in 2095. More than 300 members and guests were present for the celebration.

BETHEL Baptist, Snead, will celebrate fall with its Fall Festival on Saturday, Oct. 21, 4-8 p.m. There will be a costume contest, games, prizes, and more.

DADEVILLE First Baptist recently honored Alfred Harrelson upon his completion of 50 years of service and ministry through the adult choir.

MIGNON Baptist, Sylacauga, will host Melissa Bryant in concert on Sunday, Oct. 22 at 6 p.m. No admission charge, but a love offering will be taken.

LAKEVIEW Baptist, Auburn, is hosting Cal Guy as theologian in residence for ten weeks. Guy is the founding director of the World Mission and Church Growth Center at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He will speak at the church on Sunday morning, Oct. 29 and Sunday evening, Nov. 5, as a part of Lakeview's World Missions Conference. He will

also teach mission courses through the Lakeview Institute For Equipping, a preaching class for young men called to the gospel ministry, and a Sunday School class.

WEDOWEE First Baptist will hold a dedication ceremony for its new facilities on Nov. 5. Sunday School will begin at 9:45 a.m. Worship at 11, followed by a covered-dish meal. The dedication will follow the luncheon and will feature Bily Nutt as guest speaker.

UNIVERSITY OF MOBILE Board of Regents has elected as chairman Howard L. "Chip" Smith, pastor of Glynwood Baptist in Prattville. Smith was appointed to the board in 1994 and will serve a one-year term as chairman.

MOBILE ASSOCIATION church media library organization held its fall conference on Sept. 23. Thirty-two church media library workers honored Janice Etchison for 12 years of service as the organization's director.

REVIVALS:

NEW HOPE Baptist, Bessemer: Oct. 22-25. Services will be at 7 p.m. nightly. Evangelist, Wayne Compton. Music, Lloyd Jones.

WOODLEY EAST Baptist, Montgomery: Oct. 22-25. Services Sunday at 6 p.m., Monday-Wednesday at 7 p.m. Guest

evangelist, Jim Bowen. Zack Godwin will lead the music.

COMMUNITY Baptist, Maylene: Oct. 22-25. Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, 7 p.m. Guest evangelist, Alan Dennis. Chuck Johnston will lead the music.

BETHELEHEM Baptist, Midland City: Oct. 22-25. Services nightly at 7 p.m. Guest evangelist, André Dobson. Music will be led by Wally Johns. A covered-dish supper will be held Wednesday at 6 p.m.

HOMEcomings:

WOODRIDGE Baptist, Mobile: Oct. 22. High Attendance Day for Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m. followed by dinner on the ground. There will be no evening service. For more information, call (334) 633-6000.

PRATT COURT Baptist, Prattville: Oct. 22. Noel Walker will speak at 9:45 a.m. Music by the Servitudes at 11 a.m., followed by a covered-dish lunch. For more information, call (205) 365-1246.

MOUNT PLEASANT Baptist, Enterprise: Oct. 22. Former Pastor D.E. Beasley will speak. Billy Henson is pastor of Mount Pleasant.

WOODLEY EAST Baptist, Montgomery: Oct. 22. Charles Pagett will speak in the worship service, and lunch will follow.

EXCEL Baptist, Excel: Oct. 22. Richard Bailey will speak at the worship service. Covered-dish lunch at noon, followed by an afternoon singing with David Graves and the Revelators.

CENTRAL Baptist, Tarrant: Oct. 22. Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Former pastor Archer Thorpe will speak at 10:30 a.m., followed by covered-dish lunch and singing with the Tunnell Sisters Quartet.

Carver School deal falls through

Samford University, Southern Seminary can't agree on terms of transfer

By Bob Terry
The Alabama Baptist

On Sept. 22, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary president R. Albert Mohler Jr. said he expected the seminary trustees to give "overwhelming support" to a proposal to transfer the Carver School of Church Social Work to Samford University in Birmingham.

But by the time seminary trustees gathered for their Oct. 9-10 meeting, in Louisville, Ky., Mohler did not have an agreement to present to the trustees. Within hours of the trustees' leaving, Mohler started negotiations with a Kentucky college to assume responsibility for the seminary's master of church social work degree program.

The difference in terms — the Carver School of Church Social Work and the master's degree program in social work — illustrates the reason the announced agreement between Southern Seminary and Samford University fell through.

Thomas E. Corts, president of Samford, explained that he first became aware of differences between the two institutions after the announcement of the proposed transfer. "It was only after the announcement that Dr. Mohler called to say the seminary was not negotiating the transfer of all the parts related to the Carver School of Social Work."

"That came as a real surprise to us," Corts said.

Mohler argues the only thing ever up for transfer was the degree program and materials connected to it such as books, audiovisuals, computer programs and a list of graduates with social work degrees.

"We have no interest in severing the legacy of the Carver School of Social Work from Southern Seminary," Mohler said in a telephone interview. "What we are after is the degree program being transferred to a different institutional context."

Corts said Samford's interest was always in the Carver School of Church Social Work. That includes the endowed faculty positions, endowed scholarships for social work students, archives of the school and its predecessors, as well as library and other support materials.

"Why would we want to buy used library books and import to our campus the baggage associated with the church social work pro-

"We spent a lot of time and a lot of money for the project to end up like this."

—THOMAS CORTS, president of Samford University

"It is a case of two institutions having different goals."

—ALBERT MOHLER, president of Southern Seminary



CORTS

gram at Southern Seminary?" asked Corts. He said in the view of the university, the Carver School of Church Social Work stands in a direct line from the Carver School of Missions and Church Social Work and its predecessor, the Woman's Missionary Union Training School.

The WMU Training School operated under the auspices of the WMU for 50 years before being given to the Southern Baptist Convention in 1957. In 1963, the school was merged with Southern Seminary. The merger gave the seminary all of the school's land, buildings and endowment.

At a news conference Oct. 10, Mohler said the seminary never considered transferring endowment funds to Samford University. He said the only thing being negotiated were the items connected to the master of social work degree program since 1984, the year the social work program was organized into the seminary's fourth school.

A day later Mohler said in a written statement, "Southern Seminary and Samford University had negotiated a written Transaction Agreement. As of the time of our Oct. 10 trustee meeting, I was prepared to move forward on that previously negotiated agreement."

Corts and William E. Hull, Samford's chief academic officer, say not so.

No agreement

"We had a two-page working document," Corts said. "But nothing that approached an agreement."

Hull added, "It was never a case of them giving us a dollar figure and our saying that is too high. We could not even agree on what assets to put on the list."

When asked about the different accounts, Mohler said there was a "basic framework" for an agreement. "I did not say we had completed the agreement."

Hull, who handled the negotiations for

Samford, said the university wanted the social work school and its heritage. Hull said when the merger occurred in 1963, the seminary used money from its new asset to endow a faculty position in missions and one in church social work.

"We said 'keep the missions chair, keep the land, keep the buildings. Give us only the Carver School of Social Work and its heritage.'"

"We do not know how to divide a living organism," Hull continued. "Our position was like that of Solomon. Getting half of a living thing means both halves die. Either transfer all of it or keep all of it."

Mohler said he could not transfer the Carver School because it had been given to the seminary by the SBC and would take SBC action to approve the transfer.

Legal successor

"The documents say the school is to be operated by an SBC agent or its legal successor. We were willing to become that legal successor," Hull said. He also asked how the seminary could legally give away any of the social work program without approval of the SBC if the seminary is not able to transfer the whole program without SBC approval.

Hull pointed out that the report given to the SBC by the Carver School of Missions and Social Work in 1962 indicated the major reason for the merger was to allow graduates to earn accredited degrees.

Mohler agreed: "An accredited degree was important 30 years ago in the merger."

However, he argued that an accredited degree was not the only way to fulfill the mandate of the 1963 SBC, the year of the merger. He said Christian social ministries were a part of Southern Seminary for 20 years before the seminary began granting accredited master of social work degrees in 1984.

Mohler said "the world view of the official structures of social work" made the feasibility



MOHLER

of continuing an accredited masters program at Southern Seminary practically impossible. "When the committee recognized that fact, they sought a way to eliminate the school of social work while maintaining the emphasis of Christian social ministries," he explained.

"It is a legal fiction," Hull responded. "You cannot separate the degree program from all of the rest that is now a part of the Carver School of Church Social Work." He said former Southern presidents Duke McCall and Roy Honeycutt both say the Carver School is the direct descendant of the former Carver School of Missions and Social Work. "Such a division was unknown until Mohler," Hull added.

When asked the size of the endowment related to the Carver School, Mohler declined to answer. Currently, two endowed faculty positions function in the Carver School of Church Social Work. Former dean of the school Diana Garland fills the Cheens Chair of Christian Family Ministry. The WMU Chair of Social Work is unfilled.

A number of endowed scholarships for social work students were originally listed among the items connected to the Carver School given to Samford University. However, they were later removed from the list by seminary officials.

Hull said neither he nor Corts wanted to get "drawn into the tar baby of mutual recriminations. We are profoundly sorry we did not have the same understandings (as Mohler) from the beginning."

Corts labeled the episode "embarrassing. We spent a lot of time and a lot of money for the project to end up like this."

For his part, Mohler said he had no animosity toward Samford. "It is a case of two institutions having different goals."

Both parties refused to close the door entirely on future negotiations. "We would like to have the Carver School of Social Work at Samford," Corts said. "We believe it would be an asset to the university."

However, the seminary is now talking with Campbellsville College, a Kentucky Baptist-related college, about assuming responsibility for the master of social work program. Campbellsville offers a baccalaureate program on the seminary campus for students enrolled in Southern's Boyce Bible School, a program for persons without a college degree.

Elba Christians strive for racial harmony, brighter tomorrow

By Rebecca Day
The Alabama Baptist

At a city council meeting, two businessmen argue over zoning laws. One is white, the other black. Racial strains fly as the conversation heats up.

A fight between two students at a high school football game begins as a verbal argument and ends in gunfire. One of the students is killed, the victim of a racially motivated argument.

Racial tension is not a new issue in Alabama. Most communities deal with racial conflict daily. Others may not have frequent problems, but the issue does arise.

Elba is a town where racial conflict is not a problem of great magnitude. However, former Chief of

Police Maxwell Hooks admits incidents of racially motivated crime have occurred in the past year.

As police chief, Hooks was determined to do something to prevent future problems. "We had a few isolated incidents, but that's how big things get started," he said. "We are trying to put an end to it before we have a full-blown situation."

It all began a few months ago when Hooks asked area ministers to come together and discuss his growing concern about racial tension in the Elba community. Several church and community leaders, both white and black, were present at the first meeting.

"There's no sense in us all sitting around here waiting for something

to happen," Hooks told the ministers. "We need to do something to prevent it."

"It became apparent in the meeting that, though we knew each other's faces and names, we knew little of what each other really had on their heart concerning racial issues," said Mart Gray, minister of music and youth at Elba First Baptist.

Community service

The group met several times and decided that their first step should be hosting a community service that brought all churches together. The service was well attended, according to Gray, with representation from both the black and the white communities.

The success of the efforts prompted Gray and minister Keith Ellison of Harris Temple Church of God in Christ to plan a joint event for their churches.

A few days later, First Baptist hosted Harris Temple for a barbecue supper. After the supper, the Alabama Mass Choir, a state-wide group directed by Ellison, presented a concert in the sanctuary, which was filled to capacity.

And the efforts continue. A new ministerial association has been started in Elba with ministers from both black and white churches, and a community Thanksgiving service has been planned for the Sunday before the holiday, Gray said.

The ministers are planning

other events, as well. "We want to bring small groups together and get to the heart of the issues," Gray said, adding that they had discussed methods such as community focus groups and forums in order to accomplish this goal.

"The real work of bringing about change in our community is yet to be done," Gray said.

"We know a warm, fuzzy feeling won't solve the deep-seated racial problems that have existed for years in our community, in society, but we feel we have taken a step in the right direction," he said. "We have at least brought together those who already know the common bond of Christ and challenged them to lead the way in bringing about a brighter tomorrow."

Dale: Leadership must incorporate sound stance, style, strategy

To be effective, leadership must be sound at three levels, Baptist scholar Bob Dale told a gathering of church leaders Oct. 2.

Dale, director of the Center for Creative Church Leadership Development in Richmond, Va., spoke at a Baptist Center for Ethics conference on Church Growth with Leadership Integrity in Charlotte, N.C.

Dale, a former seminary professor who since 1989 has served on the staff of the Baptist General Association of Virginia, described three "building blocks" for leadership. The foundation for leadership is the "stance" that underlies "styles" and "strategy," he said.

"Good leaders are going to have to pay more and more attention to building a stance for leadership," Dale said. "Servanthood, I think, is a stance."

Styles of leadership can emphasize "mission" or "morale," he said, noting that Baptist seminaries have often neglected the lat-

ter. Baptists "are good at dealing with mission; we are not good at dealing with morale," he said.

Balance mission, morale

"I want to suggest to you that our style of leadership is a balance of mission and morale," he said.

Strategy, Dale said, is "the most artistic form of leadership."

"Strategy is what you do when you realize you can't be two places at one time," he said, "when you realize you have more opportunities than you have resources."

In a forthcoming book, *Leading Edge: Leadership Strategies from the New Testament*, Dale studied leadership strategies in the New Testament. He noted transition in strategies used as the early church matured.

"Jesus was a highly focused leader," Dale said. "He didn't take on too many things. He just tried to bring in the kingdom of God."

Taking a key from that exam-

ple, Dale said, "The first thing you and I have to determine is what will I give my attention to, what will I be zealous about."

In the book of Acts, leadership was marked by flexibility, Dale noted. "Every time the Holy Spirit opened the door, they were quick to move through."

Leadership strategies took a different focus, however, by the time pastoral epistles were written, Dale said.

When the early church turned into "an establishment," he observed, its leaders "all of a sudden stopped playing offense as they had in the book of Acts and started playing defense."

The writers of the epistles emphasized "negative verbs" in their admonitions, like "rebuke," "fight back," and "guard against," Dale noted.

Dale observed that leading established churches poses a special challenge. "When we become the establishment, we become so engrossed in protecting our pres-

A SEVEN-POINT AGENDA FOR CHURCH LEADERS TO ACT ETHICALLY

as listed by Robert Parham, director of the Baptist Center for Ethics

Be positive: be for something rather than against something all the time

Be proactive: take an initiative and take a risk sometimes

Act with your neighbors in mind: they are in the boat with you

Act today for tomorrow: make forward-looking decisions

Sometimes do nothing: it may be the best thing to do

Be civil: state your own position without bashing your opponents

Play: rest and relax lest the task of Christian living become a burden

ent and our past we run risk of losing the future," Dale said.

A final shift emerged in the book of Revelation, one of only two biblical books written when Christianity was in danger of annihilation, Dale said. Leadership in that era offered "encouragement" and an appeal to return to the basics of the gospel, he said.

Dale said a cultural shift from

an industrial society to one characterized by information redefines the task of leadership from "making things" to "making sense."

"In an information age, we are what we understand," Dale said. "The leader is not the person at the front of the room. The leader is the person who can help people make sense." (ABP)

Historical Highlights FROM 'THE ALABAMA BAPTIST'

50 Years Ago - October 1945

COOSA RIVER ASSOCIATION: Coosa River Association convened at Hepzibah Baptist Church, a beautiful rural church situated on a hill in a grove of oaks. Leon Spain is pastor of the church and also clerk of the association. Pastor Perry Claxton of First Baptist Church, Talladega, is moderator of the association, and in his opening address he gave much historical information referring to a sermon preached before the association 62 years ago by Samuel Henderson, who was at that time editor of *The Alabama Baptist*.

40 Years Ago - October 1955

MUD CREEK ASSOCIATION: Mud Creek Association met at Mud Creek Baptist Church, established in 1837 and one of the oldest churches in the state. The present building was dedicated in 1906 and has the Masonic Lodge in the second story, this being very common among the churches in the early days. It is a full-time church with J. W. Simmons serving as its pastor. Eighteen churches in the association have *The Alabama Baptist* in their budgets with two sending to each resident family.

30 Years Ago - October 1965

WALKER ASSOCIATION: An unusually large crowd attended the first day's session of the Walker Association meeting in the beautiful Northside Baptist Church at Jasper. Ray Felkins, pastor of First Baptist Church, Parrish, served as moderator, and Fred Lackey, pastor at Westside, brought an excellent message during the session.

20 Years Ago - October 1975

PICKENS ASSOCIATION: Pickens Baptist Association met in its 140th annual session at Arbor Springs Baptist Church which celebrates 103 years of existence this year. Fourteen of the 32 churches in the association are 125 years old or more. First Baptist Church, Aliceville, is the oldest. It came into being in 1823, the same year the Alabama Baptist State Convention was organized.

10 Years Ago - October 1985

MONTGOMERY ASSOCIATION: Buddy C. McGohon, pastor of South Avondale Baptist Church in Birmingham, has been called as director of missions for the Montgomery Baptist Association, effective Nov. 1.

—Compiled by Kathleen V. Prude

Conference speaker offers points on handling conflict

Conflict is inevitable in the church, according to Dave Odom, a specialist in helping congregations resolve conflict.

"The definition of peace is not the absence of conflict," said Odom, director of the Center for Congregational Health in Winston-Salem, N.C. Odom led a session on conflict resolution during the Baptist Center for Ethics conference on "Church Growth with Leadership Integrity."

Ministers often are the last to admit that conflict has risen to dangerous levels, Odom said. And even laypeople often deny the presence of conflict in the church, he added.

Odom outlined a process that conflict often follows in churches and noted some conflicts can be thwarted by facing them head-on as they arise. As conflicts elevate to higher levels, the chance of avoiding long-term damage decreases, he noted.

The first step to resolving conflict is to understand that different people employ different styles of conflict management, Odom said. He outlined five styles identified by Speed Leas:

► **Persuade.** The persuader assumes that the other person is simply ignorant or incorrect and needs to be changed. This assumes that with enough persuasion, the other person will change positions.

► **Compel.** The compeller uses the force of authority to demand compliance.

► **Avoid/accommodate.** This style, which Odom said is the most common for ministers, leads a person to stay out of the

conflict, either actively or passively. While such a style is appropriate sometimes, it is dangerous at other times, he said.

► **Collaborate.** The collaborator gets everybody together to look for a "win-win" solution. But Odom said such an outcome may not be possible in every situation.

► **Negotiate.** The negotiator employs a strategy similar to the collaborator, but doesn't look for a "win-win" solution. In this model, no one gets everything they want, but some resolution is achieved.

► **Support.** The supporter merely listens to the conflict without offering any solution or direction. This is the style most often employed by counselors, Odom said.

Each of these styles of conflict management may be appropriate in certain settings, he said. The effective leader will know how to adapt to the circumstances and not remain stuck in one style, he explained.

The simplest way to manage conflict is to keep it at the most basic level or move it back to that basic level, Odom said. This basic level focuses on "we have a problem to solve" rather than on personalities and side issues.

Odom advises writing out a "workable problem statement" as the guide to solving the problem at hand. This statement must be free of blame, specific and descriptive, not have to do with the distant past, not be a "put down" of any involved party and must be agreed to by all involved as a definition of the problem.

The Center for Congregational Health, which Odom directs, is a ministry of North Carolina Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem. The center offers consulting services to all churches in the Jewish and Christian tradition to help congregations understand their identity, clarify their mission and resolve conflict. (ABP)

Money received to help in disasters

The Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions is receiving money to help victims of disasters. Alabama Baptists currently are engaged in disaster relief work in at least three Alabama cities — Enterprise, Luverne, and Tuskegee — and at St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Disaster relief units been assigned to Enterprise, Luverne, and Tuskegee, where volunteers are preparing meals for victims of Hurricane Opal. Volunteers on St. Croix are using a mobile kitchen to prepare meals for victims of Hurricane Marilyn. The work is coordinated by the board's Brotherhood Department.

If you would like to contribute to disaster relief efforts, make checks payable to the State Board of Missions, mark them "Disaster Relief," and mail them to: Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief, P.O. Box 11870, Montgomery, AL 36111-0870.

Alabama missionaries honored upon retirement

Alabamians were among more than 75 retiring missionaries who were honored by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in a recognition service Oct. 9 at the First Baptist Church of Richmond, Va.

Among the honorees (listed with their Alabama ties) were the following:

►Phillip M. and Martha Brandon Anderson served in the Philippines. He was born in Sheffield, considers Florence his hometown, graduated from Florence State College, and served on staff at Cullman First Baptist Church and Vestavia Hills Baptist Church in Birmingham. She was born in Reform, considers Florence her hometown, graduated from Florence State College, and served as campus minister at Jefferson State Junior College.

►Robert C. and Gerry Smith Covington served in Malaysia, Australia, and Singapore. He was born in Brewton, considers Montgomery his hometown, graduated from the University of



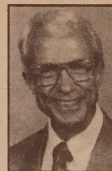
THE ANDERSONS



THE COVINGTONS



THE GIBSONS



THE HUNTS



HAGOOD



THE JONESES



THE MCCLELLANDS



THE MCKINLEYS



THE WHITSONS

Alabama, and was a Samford extension teacher and pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist in Carbon Hill. Born in Gadsden, she earned degrees from the University of Alabama and considers Birmingham her hometown.

►Fred M. and Mary Ella Bowers Gibson served in Singapore. He was born in Selma and graduated from Marion Military Institute.

►Archie V. and Caroline McManus Jones served in Chile. She grew up in Montgomery and

graduated from Troy State University.

►Martha Hagood served in Japan and Nigeria. She was born in Oxford and considers Columbia her hometown. She is a graduate of Howard College and the Medical College of Alabama and served as a physician at Birmingham-area hospitals.

►Bob W. and Rosalie Hall Hunt served in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Australia, India, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines. He was born in Albertville, gradu-

ated from Howard College, served as associate pastor and youth minister at Boaz First Baptist, and was a summer missionary in Randolph Baptist Association. She is a graduate of Jacksonville State University and the University of Montevallo.

►C.W. and Vertie Pitts McClelland served in Rhodesia and South Africa. He was formerly pastor of Friendship Baptist Church in Bon Secour and a public school teacher in Foley. She

served as a practical nurse and as a substitute teacher in Foley.

►Hugh T. and Rebecca Knott McKinley served in Zimbabwe (formerly known as Rhodesia). He was born in Birmingham.

►David H. and Betty Ann Clark Whitson served in Tanzania. He was born in Bankston, attended the University of Alabama and Livingston State Teachers College, and served as an assistant pastor in Shawmut. She taught school in Shawmut.

(Compiled by The Alabama Baptist)

FMB trustees endorse plan for former communist countries

Trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board Oct. 11 endorsed a bold plan to seize emerging op-

portunities for the gospel created by the collapse of communism in the former Soviet Union.

To take advantage of these op-

portunities, trustees are asking Southern Baptists to participate in "White Harvest '96" by meeting an ambitious \$100 million goal for the 1995 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for former missions.

During their Oct. 9-11 meeting in Richmond, Va., trustees approved a \$202.6 million budget for 1996 that injects \$10 million into an intensive effort in the countries of the former Soviet bloc. Trustees earmarked \$90 million of the upcoming 1995 Lottie Moon offering goal for the board's basic budget and the additional \$10 million for White Harvest.

Total force now 4,131

The board also conferred emeritus status on 77 retiring missionaries, appointed 25 new missionaries, and reappointed four others, bringing the total missionary force to 4,131.

White Harvest money would follow a special infusion into the region this year of \$4.8 million from the Cooperative Program, the Southern Baptist unified giving program.

Last year trustees pledged to use in the former Soviet bloc up to \$5 million of Cooperative Program receipts above 1995 budget needs. In early October, FMB officials learned a year of record giving by Southern Baptists would result in an extra \$4.8 million.

Seventy years of communist repression devastated Baptist work in countries dominated by the Soviet Union, said John Floyd, director of FMB work in Europe. The collapse of the Soviet Union reopened doors for the gospel.

FMB staff and trustees "feel like we have to hit that area in a hurry... because there are doors open to us that have never been open before," said Gene Dykes, an FMB trustee and a member of the First Baptist Church of Center Point, Birmingham Association.

Dykes, who attended his second FMB meeting as a new trustee, said he was pleased with the session. "It was a great meeting... I am very pleased with the complete sincerity of the staff and the other trustees. I can assure everyone that they have our missionaries completely at heart," said Dykes, who is president of Shook and Fletcher Mechanical Contractors.

The \$4.8 million from the Cooperative Program and the \$10 million projected from the 1995 Lottie Moon offering will buy houses and automobiles for new FMB missionaries pouring into the newly-open countries. It will fund evangelism projects, new church starts, literature production, strategic land purchases, church construction and renovation and theological education, Floyd said.

The annual Lottie Moon offering will provide 46 percent, a projected \$90 million, of the board's 1996 basic budget. To supply the \$10 million needed in the former Soviet bloc, Woman's Missionary Union and Foreign Mission Board leaders have challenged Southern Baptists to give \$100 million through the offering.

3.4 percent increase

Apart from the \$10 million for White Harvest '96, the \$192.6 million basic budget represents a 3.4 percent increase over 1995, said Carl Johnson, vice-president for finance. Overseas work will get 87.2 percent of the budget.

Missionary support accounts for 70 percent of the \$6.4 million increase in the budget, Johnson said. Record numbers of new missionaries, rising living costs and a weak dollar have dramatically raised the cost of supporting the missionaries in 131 countries.

Board members also considered a proposal to cut costs by reducing the number of trustees from 89 to 55 through a new formula, implemented by attrition, that allocates one trustee position to each state and additional positions for each 500,000 members of Baptist churches in a state. The trustees voted to delay action on the proposal until their Dec. 11-13 meeting in Memphis, Tenn.

(Compiled by The Alabama Baptist)



HEADED FOR SPAIN — Fifty-one Alabama Baptists left Oct. 11 for two weeks of evangelistic mission in Spain, an effort coordinated by Spanish Baptists, the Foreign Mission Board, and Harper Shannon, director of evangelism for Alabama Baptists. Among those departing from Birmingham were, from left: Billy Abrams, Cedar Grove Baptist, Leeds; Gene Zeiger, First Baptist, Pell City; Asa Couch, New Georgia Baptist, Birmingham; and Evan Zeiger, First Baptist, Pell City. (Photo by Johnnie Sentell)

Poll helps Canadians focus on evangelism

A poll taken by Vision 2000, an organization committed to evangelizing Canada before the turn of the century, has revealed that most evangelical Canadian churches have high zeal and ambition but limited results.

The survey was conducted at the organization's "Consultations on Evangelism" last spring, held throughout the country. The results of the survey were analyzed this summer by sociologist Reginald Bibby; he said leaders who participated in the survey "showed little awareness of the crucial importance of distinguishing between internal and external forms of evangelism." He concluded that only 10

percent of evangelical church growth in Canada is from people "outside" the church—people who were not coming from other evangelical churches.

Bibby's 55-page summary, based on responses from 1,214 people, also revealed that while more than 90 percent of pastors and other church leaders listed evangelism among their top five ministry priorities, only 68 percent indicated that their churches have an evangelism program in place.

Also, 75 percent of the survey's participants admitted that they could estimate how many people were evangelized by their church in 1994. Half of those said the total number of con-

verts was at five or less.

The pastors and church leaders said that the most useful evangelization methods are efforts such as youth activities, camps, and making friends.

The evangelization methods that were listed as "least helpful" among participants were door-to-door visitation, videos, community surveys, paid advertising, and telemarketing.

In another group of questions, Bibby found that many congregations don't have much contact with people in the community. Half of respondents "indicated that people in their communities may not sense that their churches care about their needs." (EP)

Wycliffe denies allegations of spying, cultural desecration

One of the world's most renowned Bible translating organizations is denying allegations of CIA involvement and cultural desecration presented in a new book.

In their new book, *Thy Will Be Done* (HarperCollins), Gerard Colby and Charlotte Dennet accuse Wycliffe's founder W. Cameron Townsend and former Vice-President of the United States Nelson Rockefeller of befriending right-wing dictators, assisting the Central Intelligence Agency, and destroying cultures.

The 900-page book deals with

Rockefeller's efforts at political and economic influence in Latin America and Townsend's efforts to translate the Bible into every language.

The authors allege that Wycliffe's related organization, the Summer Institute of Linguistics, was used to "pacify" Indian tribes in order to open the door for urbanization and industrialization. They also claim that introducing the Bible and Christianity destroyed the tribal cultures, often leading to tribal "extinction."

Wycliffe spokesperson Arthur Lightbody denies the allegations

made by Colby and Dennet. He told *Christianity Today* that the charges against Rockefeller and Townsend have no foundation.

"Research supplied by Wycliffe historians show that there was no association between Rockefeller and Townsend," he said.

Addressing the issue of cultural desecration, he stated, "The cultural groups have a better chance of survival as they become literate, learn proper health techniques, and receive moral insight from Scripture."

Wycliffe was founded in 1934 and now has more than 5,000 active members worldwide. (EP)

DIRECTIONS TO ANNUAL MEETINGS OF ALABAMA ASSOCIATIONS

ST. CLAIR: Oct. 23, 5 p.m., 7 p.m., Arbor Baptist Church. Take Hwy. 231 to Pell City, turn left at traffic light by Steak House, church is approximately 3 blocks on the right. From Trussville/Moody area take County Rd. 10; church is approximately 4 miles from Trussville, 8 miles from Moody. **Oct. 24, 5 p.m., 7 p.m.,** Sulphur Springs Baptist Church. Take I-59 to Trussville/Pinson exit, go through Trussville; church is on the left approximately 3-1/2 miles from traffic light in Trussville.

TENNESSEE RIVER: Oct. 23, 6:45 p.m., Bridgeport First Baptist Church. Take Hwy. 72 E. to Bridgeport, turn right at the traffic light, go approximately 2-1/2 blocks; church is on the left. **Oct. 24, 6:45 p.m.,** Calvary Baptist Church, Scottsboro. Church is on Hwy. 72 E. (John T. Reid Pkwy.), across from McDonald's and Food World.

ELMORE: Oct. 24, 3 p.m., 6:45 p.m., Tallassee First Baptist Church. In Tallassee, turn left at the traffic light to the school onto Barnett St., go to the next traffic light and turn right on DuBois St.; the church is on the right.

HALE: Oct. 24, 3 p.m., 7 p.m., Macedonia Baptist Church. From Tuscaloosa, take Hwy. 69 south to Moundville, from Moundville go 13-1/2 miles south on Hwy. 69, turn left on County Rd. 31, go 1-1/2 miles to church on the left. From Greensboro, go 12 miles north on Hwy. 69, turn right on County Rd. 31, go 1-1/2 miles to church on left.

TUSCALOOSA: Oct. 24, 9:30 a.m., 1:45 p.m., 6:30 p.m., Carrolls Creek Baptist Church. Take Hwy. 69 N. from Northport; church will be on the right about 6-10 miles from Hwy. 82 and Hwy. 69 intersection.

TUSKEGEE LEE: Oct. 24, 3 p.m., 7 p.m., Providence Baptist Church, 2807 Lee Rd. 166, Opelika. From Opelika take Hwy. 51, turn left on Hwy. 169, turn right on Lee Rd. 166. From Auburn take Moores Mill Rd. (Lee Rd. 146), turn right on Lee Rd. 166.

WEST CULLMAN: Oct. 24, 8:30 a.m., 1 p.m., Bethany Baptist Church. From I-65 N., turn left at Jasper exit, travel down Hwy. 69 until you see the Bremen Thrift Store (on the right), turn right onto first paved road after you pass the Thrift Store (an electrical substation will be

on the left), turn right, go across Smith Lake and watch for signs to Country Mall. At Country Mall, turn left, go approximately 10 miles to the church. **Oct. 24, 7 p.m.,** Mt. Hope Baptist Church. Take I-65 N. to first Cullman Exit, turn right, at First Commercial Bank turn left to County Rd. 222, follow County Rd. 222 through Guthrey's Cross Roads; church will be on right in Crane Hill.

FRANKLIN: Oct. 26, 6:30 p.m., Red Bay First Baptist Church. Take Hwy. 24 W. from Russellville; the church will be on left as you enter Red Bay.

MUD CREEK: Oct. 26, 2 p.m., 6:30 p.m., Liberty Baptist Church. From I-20W/59S take Exit 120 (19th St., Ensley) to Hwy. 269 (Birmingham Hwy.), go to second caution light, turn left onto Alliance-Short Creek Rd., go approximately one mile; church is on the left. **Oct. 27, 9:30 a.m.,** Adger Baptist Church. From I-20W/59S take Exit 108, turn right on Academy Dr., then right onto Powder Plant Rd. (County Rd. 47), at the dead end turn left on Johns Rd., at caution light go straight on Mud Creek Rd., go almost 1/2 mile; church is on the left.

SOUND BITES

By Ferrell Foster and Tim Ellsworth

KEEPING UP WITH CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC

Jars of Clay, a group out of central Illinois' Greenville College, has "taken the Christian music industry by surprise" with its rapid sales, says *The CCM Update*. "This is not the first new group to take off," said Glenn Williams of Family Bookstores, "but I think it's the first group to take off at this level."

Imagine This has released a CD ROM edition of its new *Love* album. It's a two-disc package — one for your stereo (audio only) and another for your computer (audio, videos, photos, and interviews). Sorry Mac users, the CD ROM disc will play only in IBM compatible systems (386 and higher).

Marty Raybon, Paul Overstreet, and Susie Luchsinger will co-host the Christian Country Music Association Awards Nov. 2 on Trinity Broadcast Network.

NEW RELEASES

Kathy Troccoli, *Sounds Of Heaven (Reunion)*: Kathy is one Christian artist who has experienced success in the secular music industry, but this "sincere, husky alto" won't be seeing that with this album, her first completely Christian project in 10 years. *Sounds Of Heaven* "exhibits her strong desire to encourage people spiritually" and includes "heart-felt tunes that draw the listener into worship," her bio says. - TE

Joanna Carlson, *The Light Of Home (Reunion)*: This debut release, produced by Brent Bourgeois, "offers hope and healing, extending to each of us the opportunity to . . . find ourselves at home in God's mercy," Joanna's bio says. This album doesn't rely on showmanship or flashy production, but showcases Joanna's relaxing vocals in "tender ballads and groovy tempos." - TE

Scott Krippayne, *Wild Imagination (Word)*: Here's a debut album in the pop/adult contemporary market. Scott hails from Puyallup, Wash., and gradually has grown from music lover to songwriter to worship leader and then to performing artist. Charlie Peacock's the producer, and you can hear the influence of this year's Dove winner for "Producer of the Year." - FF

Various Artists, *WOW 1996 (Word, EMI, Reunion)*: This compilation of recently released material has many of the most popular ccm artists - Michael W. Smith, Amy Grant, Steven Curtis Chapman, etc. "WOW 1996 is a project that's been developed for the express purpose of introducing new listeners to ccm music," said a promotional piece. There are 30 songs by 30 artists on two CDs or two cassettes. It goes on sale Nov. 7. - FF

TOP SINGLES

- | CHRISTIAN HIT RADIO | ADULT CONTEMPORARY |
|---|--|
| 1. "Home Run," Geoff Moore & The Distance | 1. "Stand," Susan Ashton |
| 2. "Even The Hardest Heart," Whiteheart | 2. "No Doubt," Petra |
| 3. "Everywhere," The Ky | 3. "Cry For Love," Michael W. Smith |
| 4. "Well Done," Code of Ethics | 4. "The Love Of Christ," Wes King |
| 5. "Look At Me," The Waiting | 5. "Gather At The River," Point of Grace |
| 6. "Cry For Love," Michael W. Smith | 6. "Bring All The Walls Down," Sierra |
| 7. "Show Me," Out of Eden | 7. "One Love," Jonathan Pierce |

(Singles source: *The CCM Update*, Oct. 2)

Windows on the World

A feature of the Global Center, Samford University

Moving?

Where do you call "home"?

About 125 million of the world's people live outside their native lands, according to the Worldwatch Institute. The number of international refugees has climbed to 23 million, up from 19 million in 1994. Every day 10,000 people become refugees. However, countries that have previously allowed large numbers of refugees -- including Iran, Pakistan, Tanzania, and five Asian states -- are now accepting few migrants. *During the next century where will you call "home"?*

Texas association ousts church for ordaining gay man as deacon

University Baptist Church of Austin, Texas, has been expelled from Austin Baptist Association for ordaining a gay man as a deacon last year.

At its annual meeting Oct. 9, the association voted 108-55 to disfellowship the church, which was thrown out of the association once before for opening its doors to black members in the 1950s.

The church could face further

sanctions from the Southern Baptist Convention, which in 1992 amended its constitution to exclude from membership churches that approve of homosexuality.

Larry Bethune, pastor of the church, declined to name the deacon, citing his privacy. Bethune said the man is "in a long-term continuing relationship with another male," according to the *Austin American-Statesman*.

The man, one of six deacons elected in September 1994, "is one of the best deacons I have ever seen and one of the finest people I have ever known," Bethune said.

In an Oct. 9 letter to the association, which was approved by the church in a business meeting, Bethune said the church has "no policy or agenda regarding sexual orientation and ordination" and "would not participate

in an invasion of privacy of any of our members, let alone one of our deacons."

Dale Gore, executive director of Austin Baptist Association, blamed the break in fellowship on "the fact that the church had ordained as a spiritual leader a member of the church that was disobedient to the scriptures."

"It has been acknowledged this person lived in a relationship with another male," Gore said in

an interview. "The feeling of the majority of our association's messengers at this meeting was this is not in keeping with God's law."

Bethune said, "Most of the attention has come from those who believe they need to review the holiness of our board of deacons to see if it suits their biblical interpretation. That's why we feel like it's an invasion of privacy and an invasion of the autonomy of the local church." (ABP)

Supreme Court debates case involving homosexual rights

The issue of homosexual rights elicited stiff questions from and indirect debate among the justices of the U.S. Supreme Court during oral arguments in one of the new term's most divisive cases.

The court is not expected to announce its opinion in *Romer v. Evans* for several months. The decision may be a pivotal one in the escalating battle over one of American culture's most hotly debated issues.

Colorado case

The case was accepted by the Supreme Court at the request of the state of Colorado and Gov. Roy Romer after the Colorado Supreme Court ruled as unconstitutional a 1992 initiative prohibiting current and future local or state laws granting civil rights status to homosexuals. In a 6-1 vote announced last year, the Colorado court upheld a lower-court ruling against Amendment 2, the first state provision against homosexual rights. In its opinion, the court said Amendment 2 violated rights of homosexuals and bisexuals to equal participation in the political process.

In the Oct. 10 oral arguments, Associate Justice Antonin Scalia and Chief Justice William Rehnquist questioned why the state's voters should not be able to exclude homosexuals from receiving civil rights protection as a

class. Meanwhile, Associate Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer were among those who questioned the validity of such an amendment.

Rehnquist wondered why "fencing out Mormons who engage in polygamy" was any different than the case under consideration. Jean Dubofsky, representing homosexuals and affected cities in the case, said *Romer v. Evans* deals with "personal characteristics."

Scalia compared classifying homosexuals as a class deserving protected status with providing protection to blue-eyed people or bigamists. He aided Colorado Solicitor General Timothy Tymkovich when he was questioned by other justices.

When Breyer asked Tymkovich if Amendment 2 would prevent police departments from fighting "gay bashing," Scalia asked the solicitor general if there were not a law against bashing all people.

Afterward, proponents and opponents of Amendment 2 differed on whether a sexual orientation ordinance provided special rights to homosexuals and bisexuals.

"The amendment deals with granting special protection on the basis of orientation and on the basis of conduct," said Gale Norton, attorney general of Colorado. "It's a question of special protection and a question of where that issue is to be decided." (BP)

Samford to host RA/GA Day Nov. 4

Samford University will host RA/GA Day on Saturday, Nov. 4, for a time of fun and football as the Samford Bulldogs take on the Morgan State (Md.) Bears.

Events begin with a 10 a.m. assembly in Seibert Hall for testimonies by head football coach Pete Hurt, Samford athletes, and cheerleaders.

Special activities include a punt/pass/kick competition for elementary-age RAs and a cheer/sign competition for GAS. Youth in grades 7-12 may enjoy

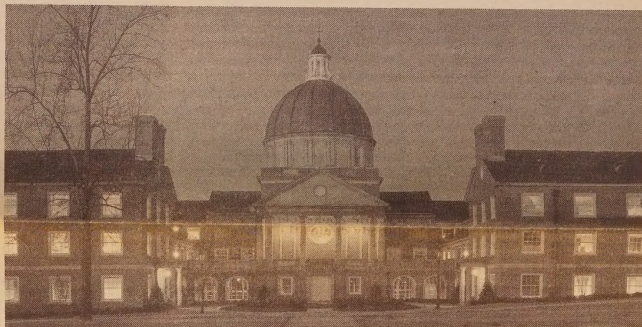
tours of the university campus.

Game kickoff is 1 p.m. in Seibert Stadium.

The \$3 per person registration fee includes all events and the game. Lunch will be provided for an additional \$3 each. Although advance ticket requests are appreciated, game tickets will be available prior to kickoff for \$4 near the west ticket gate.

For more information or ticket and lunch requests, contact the Samford Athletics Office at (205) 870-2966.

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At Beeson, we give thanks to God for our newly completed chapel. With its cross-topped dome, it stands as an enduring legacy to Jesus Christ, the Light of the World. Please join us for a special week of dedication festivities. For more information, call 205/870-2991. All events are located in Divinity Hall on the campus of Samford University.

Lecture	"Costly Grace: The Life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer"	Mary Glazener	October 23, 10:00 a.m.
Stageplay	"A View From the Underside, Bonhoeffer's Legacy"	Al Staggs	October 23, 7:00 p.m.
Worship	"A Window on the World"	Jerry A. Rankin	October 24, 11:00 a.m.
Reception	A Celebration of Friendship with W.A. Criswell, Herschel H. Hobbs and Duke K. McCall		October 25, 9:30 a.m.
Lecture	"Art: Secular Luxury or Christian Necessity?"	John Walford	October 25, 3:00 p.m.
Exhibition	The Art of Petru Botezatu	Petru Botezatu	October 25, 4:00 p.m.
Worship	A Service of Interdenominational Witness	David A. Hubbard	October 26, 7:00 p.m.
Worship	A Service of Celebration	Charles Colson	October 27, 10:00 a.m.
Recital	Piano and Organ Concert	Ronald Boud	November 2, 7:00 p.m.



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Many women today have hunger to know Lord more fully

By Betty Baggott

Sometimes the things we plan may not be the best. When an interruption comes we must make the best of it, and it helps if we do so without fret but with much prayer.

The truth is, I had written this article for *The Alabama Baptist* and secured it in a folder, planning to fax it from Waynesboro, Ga. In my rush to get away I left the article on my desk.

So I find myself with no typewriter at the moment, struggling to get this done before Bob and I leave for the noon revival meeting.

Perhaps the reason I left a little flustered was the large oak tree on my house. There was very little damage, but Hurricane Opal indeed left her stamp in Lee County.

But when you are married to a pastor and revival time comes, you just pack and leave. The tree is supposed to be moved when we return. I thank God we

HEART TO HEART



Betty Baggott is a freelance writer and a member of the board of directors of *The Alabama Baptist*. She is the wife of Bob Baggott, pastor of Farmville Baptist Church, Opelika.

were some of the lucky ones. My heart has grieved for those not so fortunate. If you are one of those reading this, please know of my prayers.

Bob will be in revival here at Rosemont Baptist until Wednesday. We are staying at Georgia's Bed and Breakfast.

Because of the fast lane of those in ministry, it does us all good to slow down and experience the peace and tranquility of a small town like Waynesboro.

And to be surrounded by the

heritage of this old house. It is as if the antiques cry out with a message they want to relate. The owner, Georgia Carroll, captivates one with the loving stories of each piece. She is a woman of God and has a servant attitude.

Being here has reminded me all over again how many women of today have a deep hunger to know the Lord in a fuller way.

Speaking to all the women in Sunday School yesterday, the comments afterwards were the same as other places I have been recently.

"Know I need to have more of God in my life. My prayer life is nil."

"My priorities are out of order, please pray for me," remarked a young mother.

Women are the same wherever you speak, and I do believe God is piercing their hearts as never before. It is clear by the attendance.

Some weeks ago Ann Cassidy had planned for 80 women to at-

tend the afternoon retreat she organized as Woman's Missionary Union director for Coosa River Association. As the speaker she called to inform me there would be 300 or more. Evidence of women's thirst for God.

Skillful planning by women in Fayette, Ala., First Baptist, a woman's conference, first time, expected a small group. The Lord led more than 200 women to attend.

Prayer requests

One thing always grieves me though. As the women in Fayette filed by to speak to me, so many requested prayers for their lost husbands, wayward brothers, and fathers who had left mothers for younger women. How men need to be a part of retreats and conferences that would strengthen their lives. That is why I am so excited about Promise Keepers. Any movement that challenges men to be spiritual leaders.

Last night on a table here on

the sun porch I picked up a book I have not seen in years, *Acres of Diamonds* by Russell H. Conwell.

This book tells of many people who succeeded and others who failed to recognize the potential of greatness at their feet. People who have searched for meaning and satisfaction in life, only to discover that it is within their reach . . . as close as the Bible.

Mike Carroll is the pastor here at Rosemont. Originally from Gadsden, a graduate of Samford University, he seems to have instilled in the hearts of his members the philosophy of this book and what I am finding in the hearts of women everywhere . . . the desire to tap God-given resources and achieve the abundant life.

I'm enjoying this charming small town in east central Georgia. The tree-lined streets and a definite slowdown in life's pace have made for an enjoyable few days. A time to reflect even more on God's grace and God's love.

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Providence Baptist Church,
Gallion, Alabama
September 10, 1995

WHEREAS, Thelma Fitzhugh, Etta Gibbs, and Tom Quinney are charter members of the Providence Baptist Church, Gallion, Ala., and WHEREAS they have faithfully served as "pillars" of faith in this church for over 60 years; and WHEREAS this church has been blessed immensely by their dedicated prayer and sacrificial service to the Lord; and WHEREAS they continue to be active members of this church;

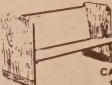
BE IT RESOLVED THAT we, the church members present on Sunday morning, September 10, 1995, wish to express our sincere love and appreciation to these three active charter church members for their faithfulness to the Lord and to this church; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT we publish this resolution of our appreciation in our local newspaper, the *Democrat-Reporter*, Linden, Ala., and in *The Alabama Baptist* newspaper.

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POSITION AVAILABLE: Resumes being accepted for the position of associate pastor through the end of October, 1995. Send to: First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 60, Mt. Olive, AL 35117.

POSITION AVAILABLE: Part-time position of music director is available in a church with great potential. Send resume to Fairhope Avenue Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1086, Fairhope, AL 36533.

POSITION AVAILABLE: Church pianist, part-time. Send resume to Music Committee, First Baptist Church Hoover, 2025 Patton Chapel Rd., Hoover, AL 35216.

POSITION AVAILABLE: Church secretary, Montevallo First Baptist Church. Experience with WordPer-

fect, bookkeeping, and newsletter production preferred. Position available immediately. Phone 665-2566.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

FOR OCTOBER 22

Bible Book Lesson

BY JERRY M. WINDSOR, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
FLORIDA BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, GRACEVILLE, FLA.

COMMITMENT WITHOUT COMPROMISE Ezra 9-10

The New International Version says when Ezra heard of the sins of the people he was "appalled." He tore his clothes and actually pulled hair from his head (9:3). What could have disturbed Ezra so? What problem could have been so great as to cause him to react so violently?

The sin was "sin against family." Ezra knew the foundation of Israel was built upon godly homes and if marriage and godly commitment were not demanded the nation itself would eventually fall. No nation is stronger than its churches. No church will ever be stronger than its families. No family will ever prosper before God unless that marriage is what God would have it to be.

Will America stand if our families fail? Is marriage threatened on every hand? Let us learn from God's Word.

Mixed Marriages (Ezra 9:1-15)

The O.J. Simpson trial caused us to visit many questions related to culture, race, religion, and justice. The sad thing is that we will probably move through this national experience (due to television) and learn the wrong lessons. As a nation, we have the tendency to react by emotion and anger rather than dialog and reason.

The Jews in Jerusalem did the same thing. They married for all the wrong reasons. Many married for money, prestige, privilege, social rank, and recognition. Ezra was shocked (9:3) and could not believe what had happened (9:4). Ezra knew that a nation with the poor foundation of corrupt homes would fall and fall soon.

Note the displeasure with the marriages was a relatively new phenomenon. Joseph married an Egyptian (Gen. 41:45). Moses married a Cushite (Num. 12:1). Solomon had numerous foreign wives. But also note this: The displeasure was not with race, wealth, or education. The difficulty came with a disparity in faith and belief.

Love is blind, but marriage is an eye-opener. The problem is most severe when believers marry unbelievers.

Confession of Marital Mistakes (Ezra 10:1-8)

Is it possible to make a mistake in marriage? Of course. But the biggest mistake is when a born-again person marries a lost person. Perspectives, plans, and personalities are headed in opposite directions. Trouble is just around the corner when the lost and saved are united.

Ezra and the people felt guilty about failure in this area (10:1). People had married for the wrong reasons, and faith was being sidetracked and commitment to the word of God was being questioned. Ezra mourned over the faithlessness of the exiles (10:6). Ezra knew that as families go, so go the church and nation.

As Ezra prayed he said he "blushed" as he approached the Lord (9:6). Ezra prayed, wept, and confessed the sins of a broken faith (10:1). He was in shock and in pain when he saw the marriages and homes all around him.

Hope for All Marriages (Ezra 10:9-44)

With all the negative crying and guilt flying around in chapters 8-9, you can't help but wonder where hope is. This seems to be answered by Shechaniah in his response to the situation (10:2-4). He confessed sin before Ezra, but he expressed hope in that a new covenant might be made with God (10:3). Note the principles involved.

There is hope for marriages when partners are willing to confess sin (10:2). Honest, heartfelt confession can affect a whole family and church.

There is hope for marriages when partners are ready to move drastically to make things right (10:3). This putting away seems very cruel, but there still was a desire to do it under the law (10:3-4) and with prophetic leadership.

There is hope for marriages when partners will spend time and energy to do the right thing (10:9,19). We know from the New Testament that divorce is not the right answer for us. It may be a choice, but it is a choice of nearly last resort. If we would put the faith, prayers, time, and energy into this marriage that it would take to save our next marriage, we can probably save this one.

Life & Work Lesson

BY DAVID E. TEW, PASTOR
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, MADISON, ALA.

THE CHRISTIAN WALK Ephesians 5:1-12; 15-18

There are many ways to describe the life God has given to those who trust in Jesus Christ. A new life, a rebirth, redemption of a slave from the auction block, the transmuting of a sentence — all communicate unique aspects of what it means to be a Christian. In this passage, Paul adds another rich description to our vocabulary of salvation. Being a Christian is to "walk in the Way."

Walk in Love (Ephesians 5:1-2)

"Be . . . followers of God," Paul urges. We often think of a follower as a disciple, one who is seeking to learn from a master or a teacher. This common New Testament image is not the one intended in this passage, however. By adding the phrase "as dear children," Paul shifts the image to that of a father leading the way with his children close behind imitating all his actions. Paul develops this image throughout this entire passage as he continues to explain the way we are to walk as children of God.

The path into which we are led by our Father is a path of love. That love is exemplified in the life ministry of Jesus Christ. His sacrificial love has made our salvation possible. Jesus Christ has shown us that way in demonstrating the love of the Father through His sacrificial death. To imitate our heavenly Father is to follow in the steps of Jesus' self-giving love. Jesus came that we might know the will of the Father and see clearly the path to take by observing the walk of His incarnate Son.

The Wrong Path (Ephesians 5:3-7)

In stark contrast to the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ stands the list of vices found in these verses. While God's path begins in self-sacrifice, these actions begin and end in the exact opposite: self-indulgence. Self-centered indulgence is at the very core of all human sinfulness. One who walks in these things is not a child of God following His path, but rather a child of disobedience following the path of ruin that comes to those who choose God's wrath instead of His love. These vices are to find no expression in the life of one committed to Christ.

Walk in the Light (Ephesians 5:8-12)

Returning to a positive illustration of the path we are to follow, Paul tells us to, "Walk as children of the light." It is dangerous to walk in the darkness. We easily stumble and fall when there is no light to see the path. When we are walking in the steps of our Father in Heaven, He lights our way with His shining presence so that we do not fall, but that we see clearly all we must do.

Paul mentions three results of walking as children of the light. First we will display the characteristics of God in our actions. Goodness, righteousness, and truth are attributes of God that are seen in His children when they walk in His way. This is brought about by the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. Second, we learn to recognize and live in the will of God. Third, we expose the work of darkness for what it is as only light can do.

Walk Wisely (Ephesians 5:15-18)

Wisdom is the next descriptive of the Father's way used by Paul. "Walk carefully, and let wisdom guide your way," is Paul's advice. The unwise follow the path of this world. The wise follow the path of God. The foolish are children of disobedience while the wise are children of the light.

The source of wisdom is not found in human endeavor. Wisdom to walk in the way of the Lord comes from knowing the will of God through the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Only in seeking His filling can we hope to discover the wisdom of God for daily living. As we are open to the work of the Holy Spirit, we discover that God's will is not an amorphous concept based on theological principles but a specific path for us to walk every day of our lives.

Uniform Lesson

BY KEITH HINSON, PASTOR
DOGWOOD GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH, MONTEVALLO, ALA.

NO PARTIALITY Acts 10:30-39, 44-48

In last week's lesson, we saw God working in the lives of two very different people: Saul and Ananias. Ananias had a vision (9:10), and Saul had an encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus (9:3-6).

God had plans for them to come together for fellowship and healing.

In this week's lesson, a similar pair of incidents takes place. First, Cornelius had a vision from God to send for Simon Peter (10:1-8). Second, Peter had the vision on the housetop (10:9-16).

God had plans to bring them together so that Peter would experience what some today might call "a teachable moment." Further, the gospel would spread more quickly to the Gentiles.

Vision of Impartiality (Acts 10:30-33)

God is impartial. He is no respecter of persons. His invitation to the world is "whosoever will" and "whosoever believeth." Anyone who trusts Jesus as Lord and Savior will be saved. The offer is open to all (though not all respond positively).

In this lesson, God demonstrates that His love is not limited to an ethnic group — the Jews — as some people had believed. Rather He gave a significant vision to a Gentile, Cornelius, who responded with obedience.

God will bless persons who submit themselves to Him and obey Him. This is a promise of Scripture and is attested by the experience and testimony of many Christians throughout the history of the church.

As the great hymn says, "Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus."

Message of Impartiality (Acts 10:34-39)

In this section, the lights seem to be coming on in Peter's mind and heart. He has what some call an "ah-ha!" moment when he realizes and grasps a great spiritual truth.

Peter said, "Now I am certain that God treats all people alike. God is pleased with everyone who worships him and does right, no matter what nation they come from" (v. 34, CEV).

This is a great passage from which to preach sermons on the importance of foreign missions. In verse 35, the King James Version uses the phrase "in every nation" for people who fear and obey God.

As the season will soon be approaching in the Southern Baptist Convention for the Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions, let's begin to think now about what we each will give to see that people from every nation get to hear the gospel.

Demonstration of Impartiality (Acts 10:44-48)

When the Holy Spirit fell upon those who heard Peter's words, the Jewish Christians — "they of the circumcision which believed" — "were astonished . . . because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost, for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God" (vv. 45-46).

The tongues were an unmistakable, spectacular way of identifying the Gentiles as people who had really trusted Christ.

Today, one who has trusted Christ should have unmistakable signs of the Holy Spirit's presence. The most compelling evidence of a life guided by the Holy Spirit is discussed in Galatians 6, which tells about the fruit of the Spirit.

For the lives of churches and of individuals today, it's not necessary to duplicate all the things that happened in the book of Acts (or, for that matter, in the gospels).

The Lord demonstrates His presence in our lives through a variety of callings, spiritual gifts, and ministries. But the most important thing is the overarching principle of love as described in 1 Corinthians 13. When we strive for that kind of love, we will make impartiality both our goal and our lifestyle.

'Common-sense' prison warden pushes 'true rehabilitation'

When Burl Cain became a warden, his mother laid down the law.

"She told me, 'You have a wonderful opportunity. You have a chance to make a difference in people's lives. Don't blow it,'" recalls Cain, warden of the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola.

"I'm just trying to do what she said, what I'm supposed to be doing."

And it is working so well Cain himself cannot believe it sometimes. Indeed, in the nine months since Cain arrived at Louisiana's largest prison, violence is "significantly less," he says.

And revival — yes, revival — has broken out at the institution. "Is there revival at Angola?" Cain repeats when asked if he would use that word to characterize developments. "There is revival in Angola. Revival is happening. When you have over 300 people taking 'Experiencing God' classes, that's revival. When you have inmates taking seminary extension courses, studying to be preachers, that's revival."

"There is definitely revival in Angola," Cain says. "Big time."

And while such developments may amaze Cain and others at times, one cannot say the lifetime Louisiana Baptist is surprised by developments. After all, Cain does not consider the work to be his anyway. "This is God's program. It's His work. As long as He wants it to go on, it will."

At this point, it has been going on ever since Cain arrived at the Angola institution in January. At that time, the former agriculture teacher made a commitment.

True rehabilitation

"I believe moral rehabilitation is the only true rehabilitation there is," says Cain, a member of First Baptist Church, Zachary, and the longest-tenured warden in the state prison system at 14 years. "So I came here committed to do what I'm supposed to do by making Christianity available. I came to this committed to seeing

their religious program at this institution flourish and to making sure no one got in the way of that. All I really did was remove the roadblocks."

Some may characterize Cain's actions as a little more proactive than just removing the roadblocks, however. He took several key steps, including the hiring of more chaplains. He authorized New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary classes on site. "We're producing preachers now," he says. "And they'll have an impact with others."

Unprecedented efforts

Cain also led in the effort to start Experiencing God classes throughout the institution, even on death row, where such efforts were unprecedented. About 70 inmates were involved in the first round of classes. The number has more than tripled now. "And that's just going to keep multiplying as it goes," Cain says.

The response of inmates to the efforts has been tremendous, he notes. "Look, it's easy to take the easy road. It's easy to lock 'em up and throw away the key. But you have to remember — these people have souls inside their bodies. They have souls."

That belief fuels all of Cain's actions as warden. "I run this prison on common sense and good judgment. It's the only way I know how to do it. So I do."

For instance, Cain teaches inmates their beds are their homes, the aisles in the cellblocks are their roads and the beds around them are their neighbors' homes. He teaches them to take care of their homes and keep them clean, to take care of their neighbors and watch out for one another. "Then if the person is rehabilitated and re-enters society, they understand their responsibilities within a community," the no-nonsense prison leader points out.

"How does that sound to you? That make sense to you? I didn't get that from an expert. It just makes sense to me."

It also makes sense to foster re-

vival in the prison, Cain adds. He uses an incident from the recent Louisiana Baptist evangelistic effort as an illustration.

During the revival effort, prison leaders decided to bring problem inmates to services. These were inmates who had been isolated because of their inability to get along with others. They were troublesome. They had enemies. "They just weren't making it in the general population," Cain says.

Prison leaders brought them to revival services unsure of what to expect, if anything — and what happened certainly could not have been expected.

"We saw people hugging the necks of people they hated earlier," Cain recounts. "We saw men turned around. We saw lives changed. I couldn't believe it. I could not believe it was happening."

"All these men were looking for was something, just looking for something to hang their hats on. And we ought to be ashamed for what we hadn't done for them before. They were ready for God. They were probably more ready than anyone."

"It was just amazing. And even though some of these people may never be free from this place, they'll now be free with eternal life. That's what it's all about."

Practical payoffs

But that is not all it is about. In addition to the eternal benefits for inmates, there are practical payoffs as well, as evidenced in the drop in violence since the religious movement began full force at the prison. "There are no losers in this," Cain insists. "If I was an atheist warden, I'd be crazy not to promote Christianity."

Of course, not all officials feel the same — and Cain admits some do not know how to respond to his program. "What kind of response am I getting? Kind of amazed. But no opposition. I mean, nobody wants to fool around with the Lord's work."

"And this is the Lord's work for sure." (BP)

WORLD OF RELIGION

Dutch doctors reexamine euthanasia

(RNS) — Doctors in the Netherlands, after a decade of experience with assisted suicide and euthanasia, are moving to tighten the guidelines under which mercy killing is permitted. Although still technically illegal, euthanasia has been openly permitted if doctors and patients meet certain guidelines. Revised guidelines have been issued by the Royal Dutch Medical Association.

Under the new guidelines, the most striking change will be one that encourages terminally ill patients who want to die to administer the fatal drugs to themselves whenever possible, rather than seeking a doctor to give the drugs.

No doctor is required to perform euthanasia, but the new rules require those morally opposed to the practice to help the patient find a doctor amenable to the practice.

The *New York Times* quoted doctors as expressing concern about the emotional and moral burden they feel during the decision-making process and at the time of death.

Opponents of euthanasia such as the Dutch Physicians League called the changes "a little step in the right direction."

Murders of Christians told in Egypt

(NNI) — More than a dozen Christians were the victims of Muslim extremist violence between mid-August and mid-September, according to an article published in the Sept. 25 edition of the independent Egyptian magazine *Roz al-Yousef*.

In the article, *Roz al-Yousef* journalist Essam Abd al-Gewad stated that during the month-long period, eight Christians were killed in Al Minya, two in Qena, and one in Assiut, and several more were wounded as part of increasing attacks by Muslims against financially well-off Christian families. Most of the victims were from Upper Egypt.

NNI has reported that an additional seven Christians were killed in August during clashes between Muslim and Christian families in the coastal village of Dimyana.

"Since the attacks in Upper Egypt started," said the writer who talked with NNI, "tens of thousands of Christians have tried to escape. If they cannot flee the violence by migrating to Cairo, they convert to Islam to escape persecution."

Group calls for 'multi-religious' state

(NNI) — A gathering of Christian and Muslim leaders has called on Nigeria's military government to officially recognize the nation torn by years of interfaith violence as a "multi-religious" rather than a secular state.

"Secularism is not compatible with the background, upbringing, and lifestyle of Nigerians because religion permeates all facets of Nigerian life," participants at the Second International Conference on Christian-Muslim Mutual Relations stated in an official joint communique.

The statement drafted at the Sept. 11-16 conference noted that "misunderstanding, bitter prejudice, and ignorance are contributing factors towards poor relationship between Christians and Muslims."

The conference recommended, among other things, that the government should "officially recognize the country as a multi-religious rather than a secular state, where no religion should be favored at the expense of others."

The statement also urged religious leaders to "properly educate and enlighten their followers on the need for religious understanding and peaceful coexistence."

Mickey Mouse could be world news

(ABP) — With global communication systems in the hands of huge conglomerates, truth-telling could take a back-seat to entertainment and profit, an Argentine clergyman warns.

International conglomerates, like those of Rupert Murdoch and Disney, are "maintained by entertainment and profit," said Carlos Valle, general secretary of the World Association for Christian Communication. There is a danger that "Mickey Mouse will become the news of the world," Valle said in an Oct. 7 press conference at the opening of the communicators' second international congress in Metepec, Mexico.

Valle claimed huge conglomerates have created a circle which links all parts of the worldwide network of communications.

"Giant companies publish a book, then the movie of the book, then CDs and tapes of the music from the movie, and finally the video of the movie," he said. He added it is difficult to see how Christian communicators could break into that circle "which is maintained by entertainment and profit," according to a report by Ecumenical News International.

BOOK REVIEWS

BY WALTER C. NUNN

Celebrating the Birth of the Savior. C. Welton Gaddy. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993. 159 pp. \$8.99. (softcover).

Are you bothered that we try to pack the entire celebration of Christmas into 24 hours? In his newest book, this pastor in Monroe, La., will help all his readers find more fulfillment by spreading it out over a longer period of time. For after all, the Christian calendar suggests a month's ob-

servance for the season of Advent.

After sharing the historical background of Christmas, Gaddy suggests ways that the season can be more meaningful for family and church. The thrust of the production, however, is a series of 15 sermons dealing with the meaning of the Christmas season.

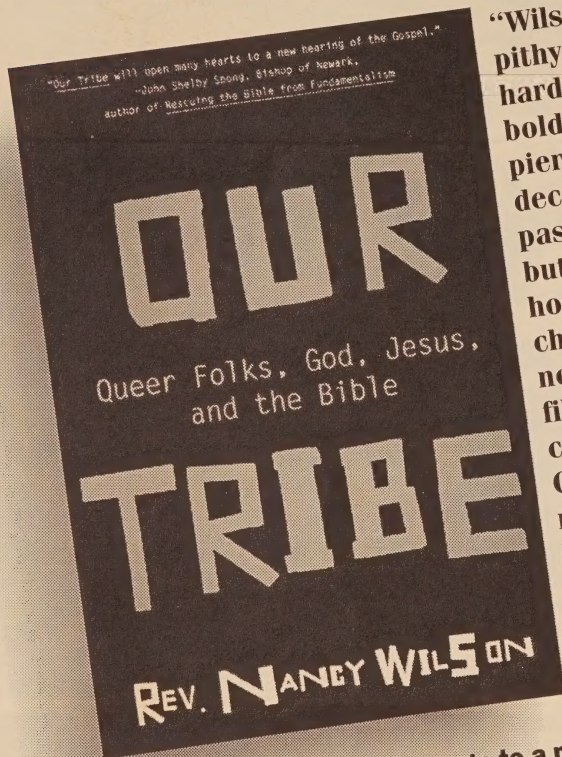
Gaddy is arguably one of the most provocative preachers in Southern Baptist life. Readers will be in his debt for reminding

us that Baptists generally have missed a great deal by not following the liturgical calendar.

According to the back cover, the volume will add sparkle to your experience of Christ in Christmas — whether you are a worship leader searching for more meaningful celebrations of Christ's birth or a layperson seeking to understand more fully the meanings of Advent and Christmas.

This book deserves an A+.

Resources for Gay and Lesbian Christians

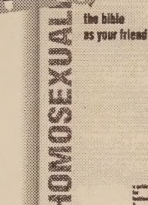


"Wilson exudes pithy humor and hard-nosed boldness... with piercing deconstruction of passages that buttress homophobia, she charges into the next millennium filled with sharp criticism of Catholics, mainline Protestants and fundamentalists."
—Publishers Weekly

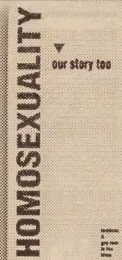
"Our Tribe will open many hearts to a new hearing of the Gospel" — John Shelby Spong, Bishop of Newark, author of Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism.

Is the Bible a document of oppression, brimming with "texts of terror" to be wielded against lesbians and gay men? Or can traces of queer history and a message of all-redeeming love be teased from its pages? From the streets of Los Angeles to the Vatican, *Our Tribe* is the anecdotal, scripture-citing, and sometimes very funny account of Rev. Nancy Wilson's mission to radicalize the mainstream church by passionately proclaiming a "queer theology" that can lead all Christian fold—gay, lesbian, and straight—into the next millennium. HarperSanFrancisco.

BP0093 \$13.95



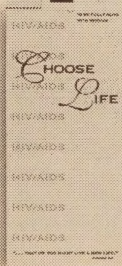
Homosexuality: The Bible as Your Friend
Rev. Buddy Truluck
BR0011 19 cents



Homosexuality: Our Story, Too
Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson
BR0012 19 cents



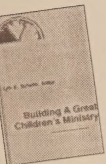
Homosexuality: Not a Sin, Not a Sickness
Rev. Elder Don Eastman
BR0010 19 cents



Choose Life: Taking Action to be Fully Alive with HIV/AIDS
Rev. A. Stephen Pieters
BR0013 19 cents

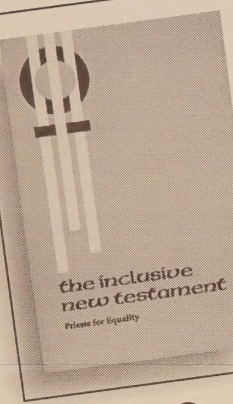


Homosexuality and the Bible: Bad News or Good News?
BR0014 19 cents



Building a Great Children's Ministry

Evelyn M. R. Johnson and Bobbie Bower, Edited by Lyle Schaller
"An unusually significant book for parents and church workers alike. Succinct and almost tersely written, it combines academic excellence and psychological sensitivity without the ponderous pontifications of either." - Warren S. Benson, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Abingdon Press.
BP0071 \$9.95



The Inclusive New Testament

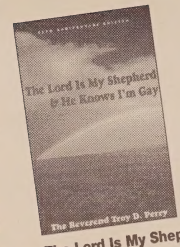
Priests for Equality
A dynamic translation, inclusive in its broadest sense, produced by Priests for Equality, an international Roman Catholic movement. It is a new translation and a "re-imagining of scripture and our relationship to them." Human and God-language are considered, and they were further attentive in creating a "critical feminist interpretation." Mutuality and equality of human relationships are stressed, including references to marriage terminology to acknowledge and value "non-traditional relationships." This version focuses on marginalized people: women, ethnic and racial minorities, lesbians and gays, and those typecast in terms of their afflictions. Praised as a "monumental achievement," and "life-giving," this version will resonate with many contemporary audiences.

BP0095 \$17.95



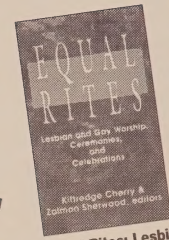
Gay Theology Without Apology

Gary David Comstock
"A persuasive case for the richer, more erotic, more just and loving humanness of every one of us."
- James B. Nelson, "An important contribution." - Letty Russell
BP0072 \$12.95



The Lord Is My Shepherd and He Knows I'm Gay

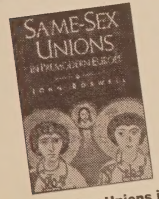
Rev. Elder Troy Perry
This long-awaited edition of a much loved book, an affirmation that lesbian and gay people are loved by God just the way they are.
BP0065 \$10.95



Equal Rites: Lesbian and Gay Worship, Ceremonies and Celebrations

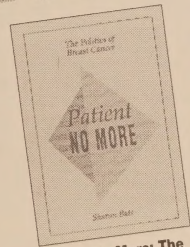
Edited by Rev. Kitredge Cherry and Rev. Zalmon Sherwood
Here is a treasury of fifty worship services from the lesbian and gay community. Some thirty contributions from a wide variety of Protestant and Catholic traditions present rites to mark turning points in lesbian/gay lives, including relationship blessings, coming-out ceremonies, gay/lesbian pride celebrations, and even a motorcycle blessing. John Knox Press.
BP0081 \$12.99

Resources for Gay and Lesbian Christians



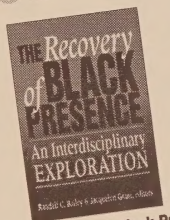
Same-Sex Unions in Pre-Modern Europe

John Boswell
Hailed as a "major historian" by the New York Times Book Review, John Boswell has established a reputation as one of the preeminent authorities on the Middle Ages. Same-Sex Unions in Pre-Modern Europe irrefutably demonstrates that same-sex relationships have been sanctioned and even idealized in Western societies for over two thousand years.
BP0063 \$20.00



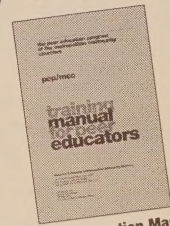
Patient No More: The Politics of Breast Cancer

Sharon Batt
Intelligent and passionate, Patient No More is both an intensely personal document of a woman's journey from anger to action, and an unparalleled exposé of the politics of breast cancer. Gynergy Books/Pagewood Press
BP0069 \$14.00



Recovery of Black Presence

Bailey and Grant
Collection of essays, a fitting tribute to Dr. Charles B. Copher, who pioneered the investigation of Black presence in the ancient world in general and in the biblical text in particular.
BP0083 \$14.95



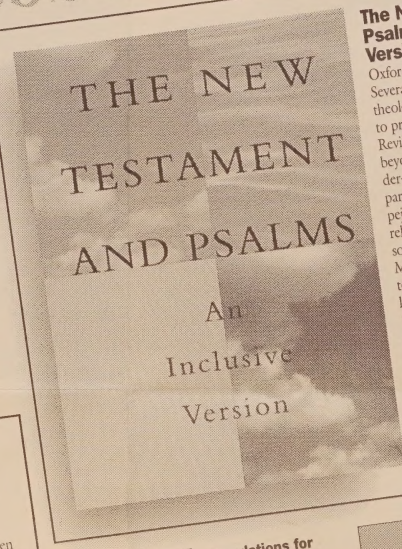
Peer Education Manual and Video

Education and training for multi-cultural youth to be peer educators who talk directly, accurately, openly and honestly with other young people about HIV/AIDS prevention.
AM0011 \$35.00



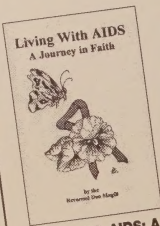
The New Testament of the Inclusive Language Bible

Crossroads Books
The first version of the bible that addressed men and women as equals. This version is offered to address the special need for inclusive language material, but it is not to be confused as the best or the last work in this effort.
BP0067 \$15.00



The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version

Oxford University Press
Several prominent Biblical scholars, theologians and educators collaborated to produce this adaptation of the New Revised Standard Version. Going beyond the NRSV, it replaces "all gender-specific language not referring to particular historical individuals, all pejorative references to race, color, or religion, and all identifications of persons by their physical disability alone." Many other terms including references to God and Christ, plus other God-language such as "Lord," "King," "kingdom," gender references to angels and Satan, and more are considered. A very progressive version considered "urgent," "challenging," and "of utmost significance."
BP0094 \$13.95



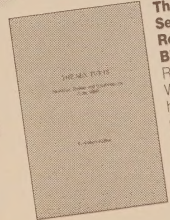
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Rev. Don Magill
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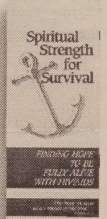


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AIDS: A Christian Response

Rev. A. Stephen Pieters
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Undercover in an Ex-Gay Ministry

"Richard, you are a man. You are a man. You are a man..."

Mike clapped his hands, hard, at a steady tempo, his voice raised nearly to a shout. He had anointed my forehead with oil from an antique jar, lifted an 18-inch-tall varnished wooden cross from the top of a cabinet, and laid it across my heart. At his behest, I was horizontal on the lavender recliner in his office, my eyes closed, covered from neck to ankles by a blanket, even though it was 85 degrees outside. The blanket, Mike said, represented the presence of God. He was going to affirm me. "You are a son of the Living God. You are a son of the Living God..."

My godly cloak was actually a young boy's blanket, a let's-play-cowboys number festooned with horses. The juvenile motif was appropriate, given what Mike had just revealed about why I was homosexual. I was still stuck in earliest adolescence because my father had never led me to manhood. I still had the heart of a 12-year-old.

"You are an intelligent, special human being. You are a wonderful special person. God loves you . . ." Mike put one hand on my head, the other on my chest. "Open your eyes and look at me." His jowly countenance was strikingly serious; the intensity of his eye contact unnerved me. "God knows every hair on your head. God knows everything you've ever done." Mike then pointed out that here we were, two men, close together, touching, eyes locked. "But it isn't going to go any further. It won't go erotic." He was, he said, showing me how to build bonds with other men that didn't involve sex.

"Little brother, you are a man. I celebrate your masculinity. You don't need homosexuality anymore."

Atlanta-based Richard Shumate is a freelance writer who has contributed to The Windy City Times and JustOut! He wrote about gay murders in Mississippi in Issue No. 19.

TO THE UNINITIATED, this celebration of my manhood might have resembled nothing so much as a voodoo rite. But the surroundings were hardly exotic. I was in a refurbished cabin behind Atlanta's fundamentalist, nondenominational Brook Valley Church, directly across the road from a parking lot notorious as the city's choicest gay cruising area. For two months I had been posing as a troubled homosexual who wanted out of my lifestyle, having gone undercover to probe the world of "ex-gays," a movement made up of homosexually oriented men and women who, in the name of Christ, renounce their gay identity.

In recent years, ex-gays have appeared as poster children for the Christian Right, whose opposition to homosexuality has proved a powerful grassroots organizing tool. To antigay Christians, ex-gays offer living proof that, with motivation, sodomites can change and abandon homosexuality. Fear of AIDS, they say, is an important factor driving gay men out of the "lifestyle" and into Christ's arms.

Remembering my own struggles with sexual identity—and how powerful they can be—I wanted to know how ex-gays coped. What motivated them? Why are they convinced change is possible? Are they in denial, or being misled, as outsiders claim? Or are the freshly scrubbed-of-sin, happy faces they show to the media real? Ultimately, I wondered, is being ex-gay a true choice or merely the result of conditioning? The only way to find out, I felt, was to check it out myself.

My guide was Mike Caven, a balding, broad-shouldered, charismatic Christian counselor in his late 40s who heads Resurrection Life Ministries, one of four ex-gay groups in Atlanta. The group bills itself as a refuge for homosexuals who want to escape their sin—sin here being any sexual activity outside of heterosexual marriage, including masturbation. During my time inside, the group involved about 20 gay men and lesbians. About 140 ex-gay ministries operate in the United States, and most of them, including Resurrection Life, are affiliated with Exodus International, an umbrella organization started in 1976 that claims, at any given time, to be helping more than 5,000 gay men and lesbians go straight. (Just three years after its founding, Exodus experienced the ultimate public relations disaster when founders Michael Bussee and Gary Cooper fell in love and married—each other.)

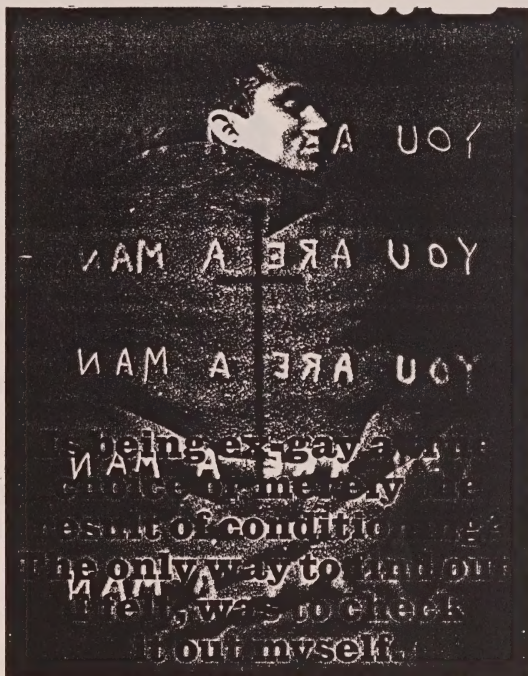
Getting inside was simple. One day, feigning depression and dissatisfaction with my life, I called Mike and told him that I felt guilty, that I wanted out. He agreed to help me, but first I had to undergo private counseling with him "for a season" until I was sufficiently Christ-centered to relate to other ex-gays in a support group. For that, he charged \$50 an hour.

I pled poverty. He knocked \$10 off his rate. I said I'd find the money somehow.

BEFORE MEETING MIKE for the first time, I scraped the rainbow flag sticker off my Pontiac. I also made three friends promise that they would rescue me if this ex-gay thing started to take hold. They were instructed to whisk me off to the French Quarter in New Orleans for some hands-on deprogramming with the boys on the gay end of Bourbon Street.

Mike started with a prayer, as he always would, thanking God for helping me get the money together to pay for the session. That, he said, showed my dedication to seeking change. Then he gave me the ground rules. I could use any language I felt I needed to use, "including *suck* and *fuck*." But I could not take the Lord's name in vain.

He gave me his own testimony of change. After nearly 20 years as an ex-gay, Mike says he's no longer tempted by men. He is married to an ex-lesbian who counsels the women who come to Resurrection Life, and they have a 9-year-old son (Mike says he looks forward to leading him into manhood, properly). Then he probed my background. I told him I



was a practicing Episcopalian but that after living openly as a gay man for eight years, I was so guilty and depressed that at times I was almost suicidal. A conventional therapist had concluded my problem was not being gay but being unable to overcome the guilt inflicted on me by society.

"Well, we'll separate the false guilt and shame from the true guilt and take the true guilt to the Cross," Mike promised. Though I had clearly told him I entertained thoughts of killing myself, he did not refer me to a mental health professional. I would soon discover that Mike had no formal academic certification in psychology or behavioral science. He was a plumber by trade and became a Christian counselor while working in Europe as a missionary.

"On a scale of zero to 10, with zero being completely heterosexual and 10 being completely homosexual, where would you put yourself?"

I wanted to ask if he had any choices higher than 10. "Oh, I would say I was right there at the top."

"A 9 or a 10?"

"That's right."

It was at this point that Mike told me that, if I was looking for a cure, I had come to the wrong place. He could help me resist sin. In time, I might even reach a place where I could be fulfilled by heterosexual marriage. "But this is not a question of healing," he said. "This is a question of character development. I'm not going to try to convert you into a raving heterosexual. That may not be possible. If you see an attractive man on the street, he's still going to be an attractive man. I can't take that away."

Even within ex-gay circles and conservative Christianity, the idea of a sudden cure—*shazam*, get up off the floor, now you're straight—has fallen into disrepute. As Stanton Jones, a psychology professor at Wheaton College in Illinois, and theorist for the ex-gay movement, puts it, "We must not believe the world when it tells us there is an easy answer to everything, even when the speaker is a Christian."

A more common view in fundamentalist circles today is that, over time, gay men and lesbians can and must, with the help of Jesus, develop self-control. Celibacy may be their only option, though most gay ministries still hold out the hope of straight marriage.

Advocates of the degayification process—even Mike—admit that it involves plenty of angst and suffering. But, says Jones, "Christians trust that there is always a

deeper purpose in suffering." Making the ex-gay lifestyle a process rather than a single, sudden event also has a practical side. If Mike promised me a quick cure, and my attraction to men didn't wane, I would conclude he was a fraud. But if I continued to lust after men, it was due to my lack of spiritual willpower.

Mike's "prescription" for me—he used that term—was to introduce an organized schedule of Christianity into my life, a blend of counseling, Bible study, and, on Sundays, a charismatic church service in, of all places, Cobb County, the suburban enclave where, just two years ago, county commissioners voted that homosexuality was incompatible with their community's standards. By building new networks with other Christians, especially men, Mike said, I could satisfy my need for masculine relationships. I could obey God, and, if mar-

riage wasn't part of my future, my new friends would help me stay celibate.

As my first session ended, Mike led me through a "Sinner's Prayer." I repeated after him: "Father God. I am a sinner. I deserve death. Forgive me. For the sin of homosexuality..."

THE FOLLOWING SUNDAY, I threw on a coat and tie and drove 20 minutes up the freeway to the Marietta branch of the Vineyard Fellowship, a nondenominational charismatic church that has established missionary churches across North America. The congregation meets in an old strip shopping center, in the shadow of a McDonald's. Coming through the door, I was assaulted by acres of blue-green carpeting and a sea of

brown chairs in front of an elevated stage. About 50 people were milling around, all of them white, most in their 20s and 30s, casually dressed. Teresa, a woman with her hair dyed magenta and a small tattoo on one shoulder, welcomed me. I made my way to the back row.

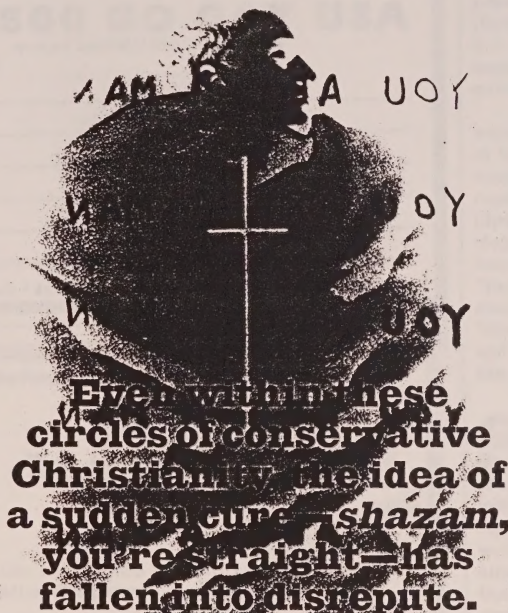
Up onstage, a four-man band and two female backup singers launched into their first set as the song lyrics flashed on an overhead screen and the audience stood and swayed and sang, hands raised to shoulder level, palms upturned to the ceiling tiles. "I will give everything to You . . . I will die . . . I will give up all my rights . . . I will give up all my life . . ." Sitting next to me was Jean, a gray-haired woman in her 50s. Every few minutes her entire body would twitch. During the presermon

meet-and-greet time, I found out from talking with her that I was the reason why.

"God has given me a message for you," Jean said brightly. "You have hope and you have a future. You just need to keep your eyes on Jesus." She rifled through her Bible for a verse to explain her message, but just then the minister launched into a 40-minute discourse on Jacob, the great deceiver. Next came a laying-on of hands.

I fled.

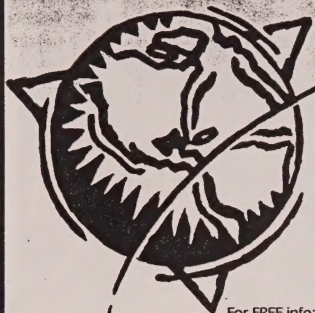
When I told Mike about my Vineyard experience, he put great stock in Jean's message. She had no idea why I was there, yet what God told her matched my problem perfectly. He saw God's fingerprints all over that. I asked to go back to my own church, but Mike was adamant. The Vineyard was the place to build the relationships I needed. "It's a radical solution to a radical problem." (continued on page 152)



Even within these circles of conservative Christianity the idea of a sudden cure—*shazam*, you're straight—has fallen into disrepute.

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freewheeling I would experience. Ted led us through part of the Book of Job, which is, in a nutshell, a long, eloquent whine. Job asks God why things in his life aren't turning out the way he wants. God slaps him down, hard. "How dare you question me?"

Tonight, Rob was having a Jobean crisis. He couldn't stop thinking about "this issue." It was on his mind first thing in the morning and last thing at night. He was at the point where, if he could find inner peace as a gay man, he would choose that path. Why, he asked, if he was being obedient, didn't God give him peace?

"That isn't the peace God promises us," Steve replied. "What He promises us isn't an earthly peace. [But] if you walk with Him, your salvation is secure." Ted then read a passage from Paul about the virtue of enduring thorns in our flesh.

To a friend in turmoil, I felt, they were offering sound bites. After weeks of biting my tongue, I wanted to slug somebody—and to assure Rob that he could, as I had, find peace as a gay Christian man. My opening came at the close of the session, where we held hands and prayed for each other. "Father God, You know what the right choice is for Rob," I said quietly. "Please help him make the choice that will be best for him . . . that will give him peace . . ."

SUCH WERE THE SMALL VICTORIES of a faux ex-gay. While I'll never know if God answered my prayer for Rob, the session offered me insights. As an ex-gay, I had banded together with conflicted men against worlds that didn't understand us, creating a bond that gave me security. But it was a false security, based on denial. We were so interested in maintaining that security that we danced around raw truths with euphemisms and choruses of hackneyed lyrics.

Shortly after Rob's episode of angst, I decided to try, one last time, to strike a nerve, using my best ex-gayspeak. "This last week, I sort of fell off the wagon, sexual-sobriety-wise." As my confession hung in the air, physically palpable waves of silence crashed across the room, turning the atmosphere funereal. Mike broke the spell by asking if I felt guilty.

"That's the part I don't understand. I expected that I would feel guilty. But I didn't. If I have faith in God, and God says this is wrong, why don't I feel (continued on page 158)

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POZ

This Week In Texas

Valley's fellowship hall for a half hour of singing. (This was almost the only time the men and women interacted, limiting my ability to compare my experiences with the women's.) Ted, a bespectacled brunet in his early 30s, would sit behind the upright Kawai piano, pounding out tunes from memory, leading us with his vibrant tenor. Tonight, his final offering was "You Are My Hiding Place, O Lord."

After that, we men retired to a room next to Mike's office to read a chapter of the Bible, verse by verse, in a round. Then we went around the table again, talking about what our lives had been like since last we met. How God had worked in our lives—or was not working as well as we wanted. How we had struggled with self-control and temptation. Stories of our victories, large and small.

Russ, a doughy, soft-spoken married man in his 50s, told us how he managed to go to a Braves game without stopping in a stadium rest room for a quickie. We murmured our admiration. Ted, an ex-gay for five years, recounted walking six miles to a store to buy pornography, only to have the Lord convict him at the door. We praised his courage.

Ted's vocabulary reflected the special language ex-gays use. Nobody is gay or lesbian, they're "in the lifestyle." Masturbation is "lack of self-control." Though the word *homosexuality* is sometimes used, it is more commonly referred to as "our issue" or "sexual brokenness." My favorite phrase was "sexual sobriety," part of a tendency of ex-gays to compare homosexuality to alcoholism. When you stop being sober, you've "fallen."

During my months in the group, about a dozen men came and went, with a core group of six or seven regulars. As is typical among ex-gay ministries, almost all came from strong fundamentalist backgrounds, which helps explain why they feel so conflicted in their homosexuality and why they seek help from spiritual communities. Only one man besides myself had ever been affirmatively out as gay. While he and I talked about trying to put the genie back into the bottle, the others struggled not to let it out in the first place, though they all had, at some point, "fallen." Three were married. Two were trying to date women, but the women tended to end things once told about "this issue." One had a girlfriend who didn't know.

The support group was where we came, in Mike's words, to spiritually vomit. When it was my turn, I told the

...didn't make me

Christ, would not
a dirty trick to cre-
and then tell you that
it."

case, his relationship
er was abusive and dis-
fully presented my father
er in equal light. But Mom
rap; Mike blamed Dad.

he poked and prodded, I tried
him nothing to support his the-
I wanted to see if he might admit
t he couldn't find a reason—that
somebody with a thoroughly unevent-
ful background might turn out gay
anyway.

Were my parents still married?
For nearly 40 years. Was there any
drug addiction in my family? No.
Domestic violence? No. Alcoholism?
Some distant relatives. Mental illness?
Not that I knew of. Adultery? Sexual
abuse? No, and no again.

Mike was frustrated. "I'm going to
bring God into this." We closed our
eyes and held hands. He asked God to
reveal my deficiencies. When He didn't,
Mike said, "Richard, we either
haven't dug down far enough, or you
are putting up a wall of denial. I tend
to think it's denial."

WAIT ON THE LORD, and
keep His way, and He shall
exalt thee to inherit the
land. When the wicked are cut off,
thou shalt see it."

Seated around a folding table with
Mike and seven other men, I read from
Psalm 37. We made our way around the
table. To my right, Rob, a tall, chubby
man in his late 20s wearing a San
Francisco tourist T-shirt, his hair meticu-
lously styled, took up the next verse. "I
have seen the wicked in great power..."

Our Tuesday night support group
had developed its own ritual. First, we
joined the ex-lesbians downstairs in

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GAY MEN

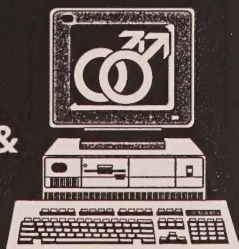
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group that I was scared. Being gay was all I knew. Most of my friends were happily gay. I didn't know if I would like life on the other side. That statement brought a cascade of knowing laughter from Tony, a former music minister and father of four with thinning gray hair who sews as a hobby. "Welcome," he said, "to my world."

WHAT ARE the attributes I like in a man? I was alone with Mike again, and he was still probing. Someone who is intelligent? Yes. Tall and athletic? Sure. Witty and charming? Absolutely. Someone with a big dick? Not a requirement, but I wouldn't send him away.

"Richard, do you know what a cannibal is?"

"It's someone who eats people."

"You are a cannibal." Mike pronounced his diagnosis with great satisfaction. After two months of searching, he had unlocked the key. My pattern was to seek out men with attributes similar to mine because, even though I had those qualities, my weak sense of self-worth wouldn't let me believe that I did. "You are trying to eat the attributes of these men," Mike said. If I had been properly led into manhood by my father, I wouldn't need cannibalism. That's when he put the blanket over me and began to affirm my masculinity.

The idea that Oedipal dynamics can lead to arrested sexual development, which can lead to mental pathology, is as old as Freud. But for more than two decades, mainstream psychology and psychiatry have rejected the idea that homosexuality is a pathology. The American Psychiatric Association also says, flat out, that there is no scientific evidence that reparative or conversion therapy works. No matter. Those like Mike who cling to the strong mother/weak father model today invariably mix psychological theory with Biblical invective, though the mix isn't even.

"Their bottom line is not psychology. Their bottom line is not therapy. Their bottom line is their own narrow interpretation of the Bible," says Chris Camp, a former ex-gay in Baltimore who keeps tabs on the movement. Having rejected the ex-gay life, he founded an alternative, Speaking the Truth in Love, a support group for survivors of ex-gay ministries.

ONE TUESDAY NIGHT in June, Mike was missing from the support group. Without his guidance, the session would be the most

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EX-GAYS (continued from page 156)

guilty?" While the others had little to say, such critical thinking raised a red flag for Mike.

Two weeks later, while leading a prayer vigil at Atlanta's Gay Pride celebration, Mike spotted me in the crowd and promptly threw me out of his group. Surprisingly, I felt like I had lost something. My ex-gay life had become like a ratty old comfortable slipper, and these men—Rob, Ted, Russ—had become, if not family, then friends. I wanted to see them again. After working my way back into Mike's good graces—I told him I had been attending services at the Vineyard—I revealed my undercover assignment and asked him if I could interview the group. Though angry, he agreed, saying they had nothing to hide.

All of the men had been invited, but only six showed up (Rob the doubter was not among them). I asked them why they denied their homosexuality, given what a draining process it was. They tossed back the expected rap about sin and salvation but with such vehemence it made me wonder who they were trying to convince.

I told them that I was proof that it was possible to be gay and Christian and that there were millions like me. But it was no use. Ted opened his Bible to Romans 1, quoting Paul's warning about giving up natural desires for unnatural. I knew I couldn't compete with Paul, so instead I asked, What if you get to heaven and find out that homosexuality is God's plan? "What happened here on earth doesn't matter," said Joe, a stocky Latino man in his mid 20s. "I've got all eternity to be happy."

But for Mike, the hypothesis would rupture his faith. "I would tell God that I don't know if I want to be with Him for all eternity, because He lied. Everything He said in Scripture about homosexuality was negative and then He says it's OK? I would be mad at God."

That's when I understood, deep in my soul, what it means to live as an ex-gay. It doesn't mean you're straight or even happy. It's the 12-step path of abstinence—applied to homosexuality. You're a Christian soldier proving your worth by shouldering the wrenching burden God has given you. Whether what He has given you really is a burden is beside the point. Your world revolves around the premise that it is.

Would anyone consciously, rationally choose such a difficult path in the absence of external conditioning? The ex-gays have their answers. And after living among them, I have mine. ♥

Stench, Pain, and Misery

LIFE IN A ROMAN PRISON.

Paul may have spent as much as 25 percent of his time as a missionary in prison. We know of his brief lock-up in Philippi, two years' incarceration in Caesarea, and at least another two in Rome. Yet Paul says he experienced "far more imprisonments," than his opponents. To understand Paul, we need to understand where he spent so much time.

Bloody ordeal

Roman imprisonment was preceded by being stripped naked and then flogged, a humiliating, painful, and bloody ordeal. The bleeding wounds went untreated; prisoners sat in painful leg or wrist chains. Mutilated, blood-stained clothing was not replaced, even in the cold of winter. In his final imprisonment, Paul asked for a cloak, presumably because of the cold.

Most cells were dark, especially the inner cells of a prison, like the one Paul and Silas inhabited in Philippi. Unbearable cold, lack of water, cramped quarters, and sickening stench from few toilets made sleeping difficult and waking hours miserable.

Male and female prisoners were sometimes incarcerated together, which led to sexual immorality and abuse.

Prison food, when available, was poor. Most prisoners had to provide their own food from outside sources. When Paul was in prison in Caesarea, Felix, the procurator, gave orders to the centurion that "none of his friends should be prevented from attending to his needs."

Because of the miserable conditions, many prisoners begged for a speedy death. Others simply committed suicide.

The privileged few

All of this could be mitigated to some extent if the prisoner was important or paid a bribe (as Governor Felix hoped to receive from Paul in Caesarea).

A prominent individual, or one expected to be released, might be kept under house arrest if he or she could afford the rent. In Rome, where housing prisoners was excessively expensive, Paul was given the privilege of house arrest, and he paid the rent himself (exactly how, we don't know). He probably lived in a third-floor apartment; first floors were used for shops, and the second floor was expensive.

In his final imprisonment in Rome, though, Paul ended his life in the woeful conditions of a Roman prison.

—John McRay, professor of New Testament and archaeology, Wheaton College (IL)

*Because of
the miserable
conditions, many
prisoners begged
for a speedy death.*

solidarity of Christians elsewhere.

But Paul was a realist, and he recognized his reputation among Jews in Judea would likely lead to more persecution and perhaps arrest. When his friends tearfully tried to dissuade him, he forged ahead. He said he felt "compelled by the Spirit to go so that he could "complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace."

After a delay—due mostly to another plot against his life—Paul and his companions arrived in Jerusalem in about A.D. 57. Since his reputation was shaky among many Jewish Christians, the Jerusalem elders asked Paul and his companions to partake in Jewish purification rites. As with Timothy's circumcision, though it was against Paul's principles, he complied for the sake of harmony.

He may have accomplished harmony in the church, but within a week, the city was in an uproar. Some Jews recognized Paul in the temple area one day, and they began shouting, "Men of Israel, help us! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against our people and our law and this place." People came running from all directions. They seized Paul and dragged him from the temple. They were about to kill him when Roman troops showed up and arrested Paul and chained him. When it was discovered that Jerusalem Jews were still plotting Paul's murder, Paul was transferred secretly by night to Caesarea.

The main charge, disturbing the peace, was enough to keep him jailed for three years as Roman authorities tried to figure out what to do with this troublemaker. Paul used the time to meet with Christians who visited him in prison, and to write letters to churches he had founded.

For the next few years, he was dragged before one Roman official after another. On such occasions, he often described his conversion and called those present to repent and believe in Christ. With deft use of his rights as a Roman citizen, he avoided being whipped.

Birth & Education

c. A.D. 6

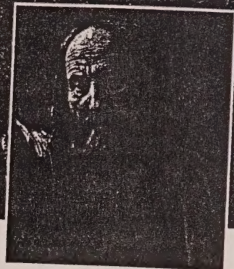
Born a Roman citizen to Jewish parents in Tarsus (in modern eastern Turkey)

c. 20-30

Studies Torah in Jerusalem with Gamaliel; becomes a Pharisee



PAUL



Conversion



c. 33-36

Converted on the way to Damascus; spends three years in Arabia; returns to Damascus to preach Jesus as Messiah

c. 36

Flees Damascus because of persecution; visits Jerusalem and meets with the apostles



36-44

Preaches in Tarsus and surrounding region



Mission Trips

47-48

First missionary journey with Barnabas, to Cyprus and Galatia



49

At the Council of Jerusalem, Paul argues successfully that Gentile Christians need not follow Jewish law; returns to Antioch; confronts Peter over question of Jewish law

49-52

Second missionary journey with Silas, through Asia Minor and Greece; settles in Corinth; writes letters to Thessalonians

52

Visits Jerusalem and Antioch briefly; begins third missionary journey



Arrest & Death

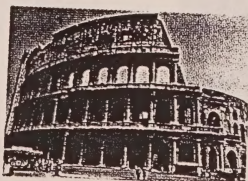
57-59

Returns to Jerusalem and arrested; imprisoned at Caesarea



59-60

Appears before Festus and appeals to Caesar; voyage to Rome



60-62

Under house arrest at Rome; writes letters to Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon



62-64

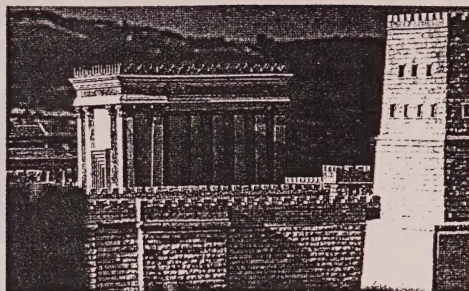
Released; journeys to Spain?; writes letters to Timothy and Titus

c. 30-33

Persecutes followers of Jesus of Nazareth in Jerusalem and Judea



A model of the Jerusalem Temple, at which Paul was arrested



44-46

Invited by Barnabas to teach in Antioch



46

With Barnabas visits Jerusalem to bring a famine relief offering



52-55

Stays in Ephesus; writes the letters to Galatians and Corinthians



55-57

Travels through Greece and possibly Illyricum (modern Yugoslavia); writes letter to Romans



64

Returns to Rome; martyred during persecution under Nero



Dates to Debate

WHY IT'S DIFFICULT TO DATE PAUL'S LIFE

Consult five Bible dictionaries, and you'll discover five different timelines for Paul. The differences in dates are relatively minor—except for the dating of Paul's visits to Jerusalem. Why?

Luke, in his Acts of the Apostles, records five visits of Paul to Jerusalem:

- (1) Acts 9:26, just after his conversion.
- (2) Acts 11:29-30, to provide famine relief.
- (3) Acts 15:2-4, to attend a conference.
- (4) Acts 18:22 (implied), after his second missionary journey.
- (5) Acts 21:17, final visit and arrest.

But Paul's letters mention only three Jerusalem visits:

- (1) Galatians 1:18, just after his conversion.
- (2) Galatians 2:1, to attend a conference.
- (3) Romans 15:25/1 Corinthians 16:3, final visit and arrest.

The dating of the middle of Paul's life hinges on which Acts visit is mentioned in Galatians 2:1-10.

The accompanying timeline assumes Paul is referring to the Acts 15 Council of Jerusalem in Galatians 2:1-10.

Other scholars think Galatians 2:1-10 refers to the famine relief visit of Acts 11:29-30, during which, they say, an informal Jerusalem conference took place. Thus they place Peter and Paul's Antioch confrontation (and Paul's letter to the Galatians, which describes the argument), before the formal Council of Jerusalem in A.D. 49.

—Janet Meyer Everts,
associate professor of religion,
Hope College, Holland, Michigan

Picture credits: Art Resource: Paul, Paul preaching in Tarsus; Datafoto International/Joop Vander Elst: Model of Jerusalem temple, mosaic ship, Ephesus ruins, Colosseum, Paul beheaded; Fotomas Index/Gamaliel; Sonia Halliday Photographs: Barnabas; All black and white illustrations are from The New Testament: A Pictorial Archive from Nineteenth-Century Sources edited by Don Rice (Dover Publications, NY).

January 8: The Barbarians, Medieval Monasticism, the Christological Debates, and Charlemagne.

Chapters 26-28

January 22: Monastic Reform, Islam and the Crusades, the Golden Age of Medieval Christianity.

Chapters 29-32; second take-home examination

February 12: The Reformation, Renaissance and Humanism; the beginnings in the New World.

Chapters 33-36

There will be two take home examinations to help you pull together some things you have learned. They are required for the Samaritan students, optional fun for others.

HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY - I

- OBJECTIVES:**
- To better understand the growth of the early church from a small Jewish sect to an important major religion in the ancient and medieval world.
 - To understand the major beliefs of the early church and how those beliefs and the forms in which those beliefs were transmitted to the church.

SYLLABUS

- September 18:** The Jewish, Greek and Roman background in which the church appeared. Jewish sects, Hellenism, and the Pax Romana.
- Introduction and Chapter 2.
- October 2:** The time of Jesus, Paul, and the first century church; the persecutions of the Christian scriptures.
- Chapters 3-6
- October 16:** The apologists, the Challenges to Orthodoxy; Gnosticism, Marcionism and the answers of the church; The great teachers of the church, Irenaeus, Clement, Tertullian and Origen.
- Chapters 7-9
- October 30:** The Later Persecutions and the Organization of the early church.
- Chapters 10-12
- November 6:** The Imperial Church and the Rise of Monasticism.
- Chapters 13-15
- November 20:** The Schisms: Donatism, Arianism and the Council at Nicea; Julian the Apostate and the Pagan Reaction.
- Chapters 16-18
- December 11:** Athanasius, the Cappadocians, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Jerome and Augustine.
- Chapters 19-25, first take-home examination.